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AMERICAN REVOLUTION

DISCOVER THE COLONIAL REVOLT THAT LED TO THE BIRTH OF THE USA

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LEXINGTON & CONCORD ★ SARATOGA ★ SIEGE OF YORKTOWN

Welcome to
AMERICAN REVOLUTION

As tensions grew between the residents of Great Britain's 13 North American colonies and the colonial government representing the British crown, the revolution turned into a full-scale war with independence hanging in the balance. Over the following pages, you will discover the key figures who played major roles in the war, from George Washington to King George III of England, the defining battles of Lexington, Concord and Saratoga, where the lives of many were lost, and how America finally won its freedom from the greatest military force of its time.

FUTURE

AMERICAN REVOLUTION

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AMERICAN REVOLUTION

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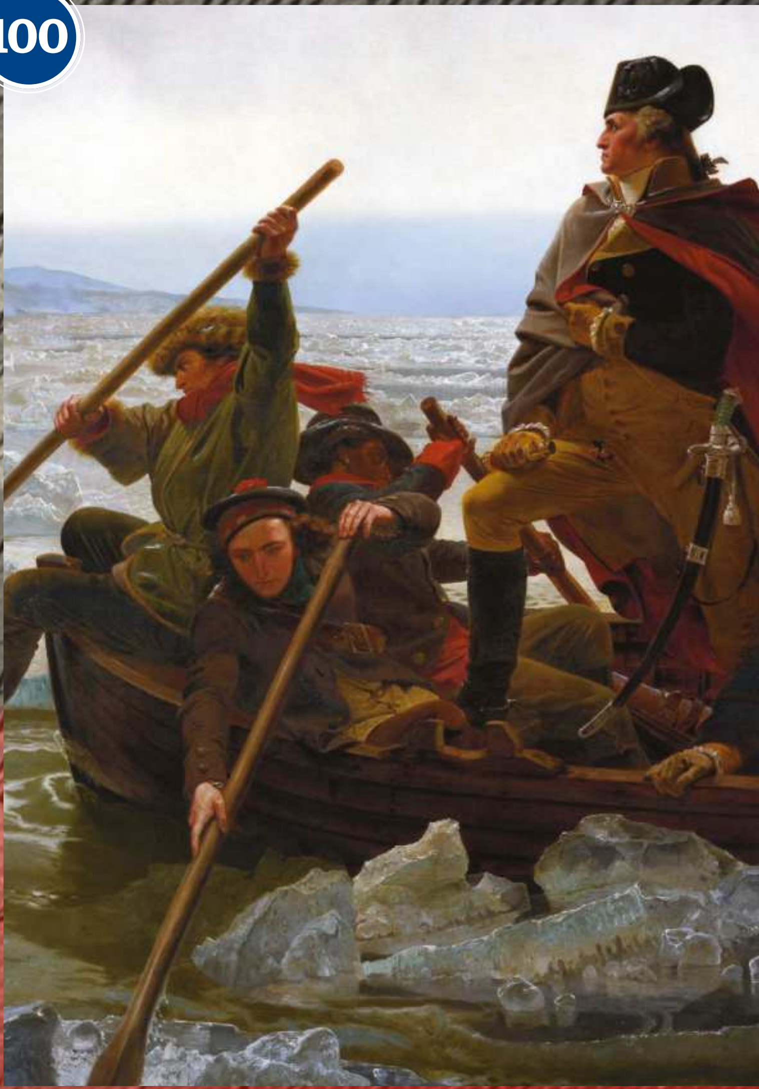

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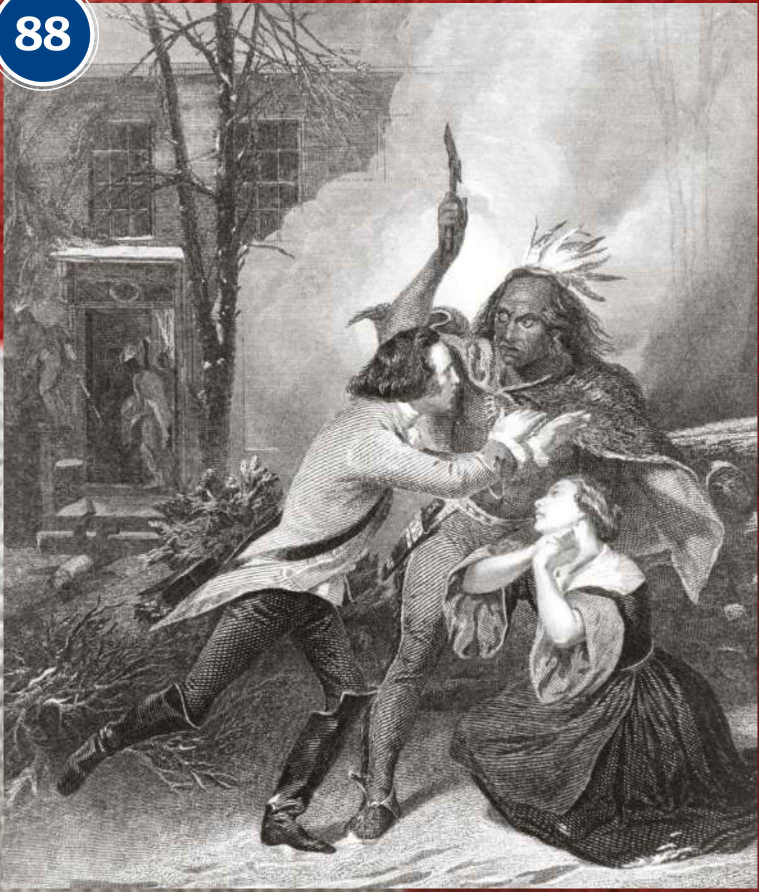

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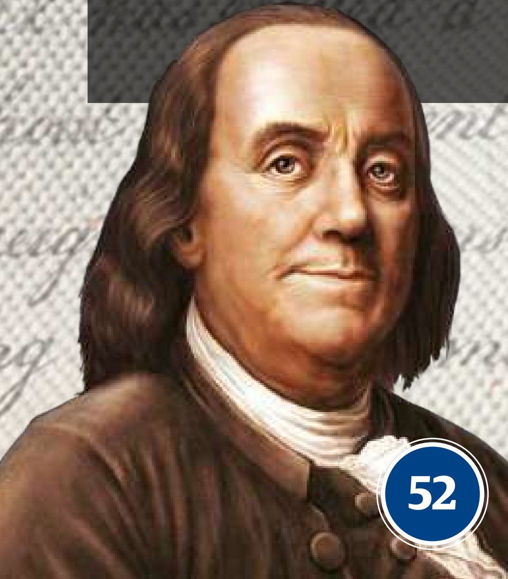

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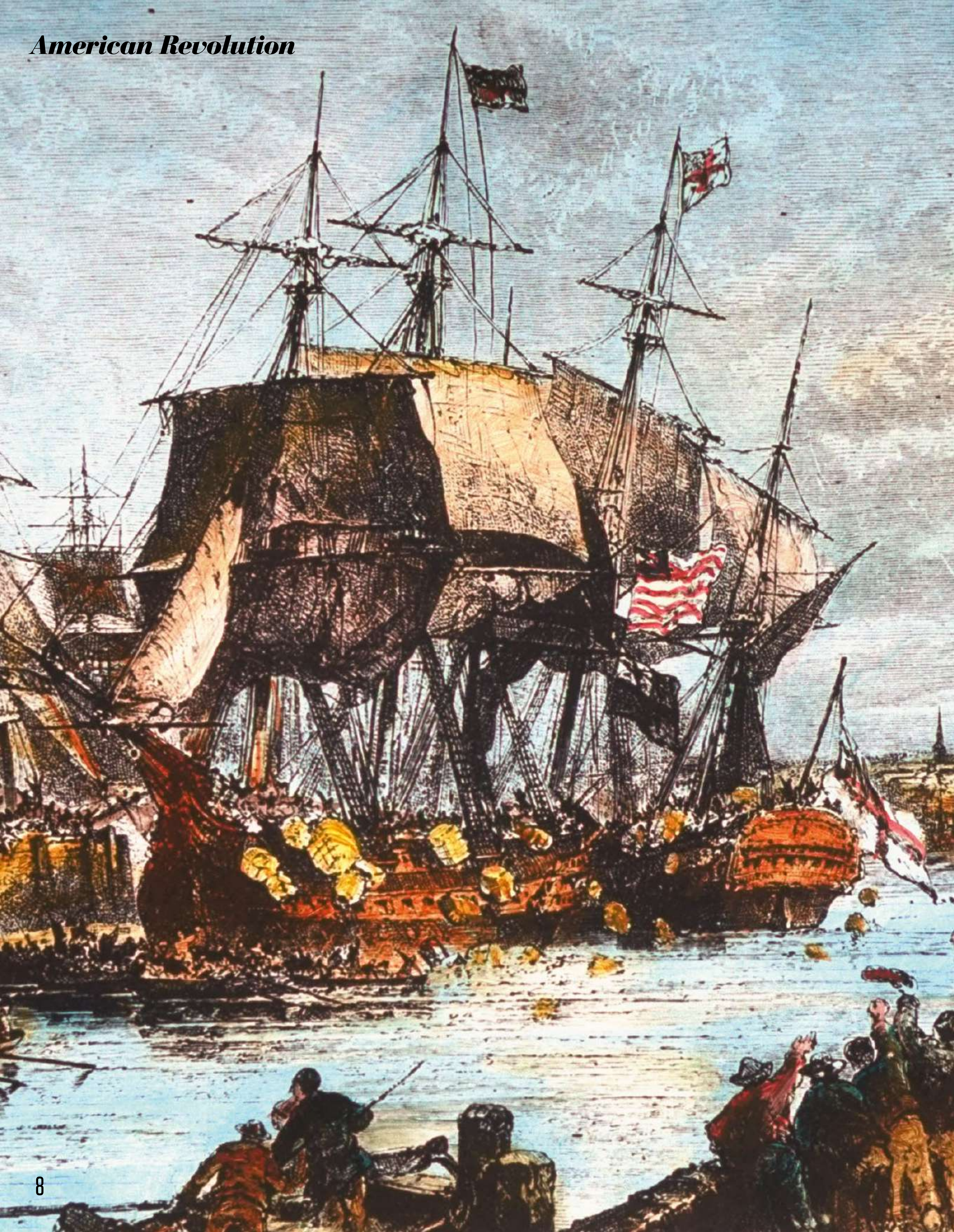

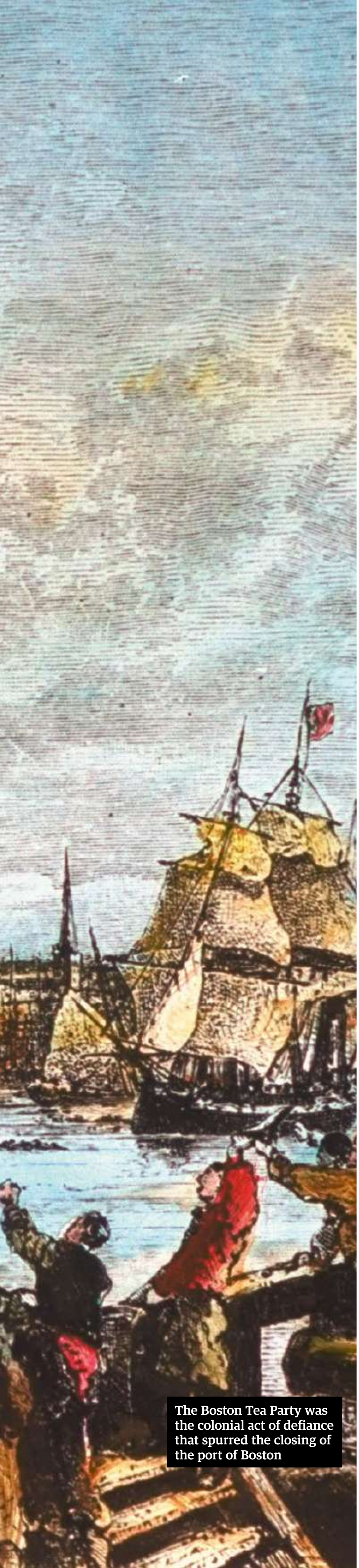
The Boston Tea Party was the colonial act of defiance that spurred the closing of the port of Boston

Colonisation and conflict

Centuries of British exploration and colonisation gave rise to revolution and a course toward independence among its North American colonies

European exploration and settlement in the New World were initiated for a variety of reasons: the search for a trade route to the Far East, gold fever, lust for land, and sheer adventure. By the mid-16th century, French settlements were established along the coast of present-day Canada and the Great Lakes. Spain had founded the first permanent European settlement at St Augustine, Florida, in 1565.

A curious blend of altruism, potential profit, and preservation of prestige spurred Great Britain to become involved in the colonial exercise. There were thousands of 'primitive heathens', natives who had not heard the Christian gospel, in America. It was the duty of the Christian church, some said, to convert these 'Indians'. North America's treasure and abundant resources were there to be exploited, and rival European powers were apparently on their way to establishing vast territorial empires in the New World.

For Britain, the establishment of colonies in North America might help it to fulfil its own ambitions. Spanish merchant shipping could be harassed from newly established ports, raw materials harvested to feed British industry, and surely tax revenues would increase. On 25 March 1584, Queen Elizabeth I granted a charter to Sir Walter Raleigh to colonise North America. Its intent was direct: Raleigh was to "discover, search, find out, and view such remote heathen and barbarous Lands, Countries, and territories ... to have, hold, occupy, and enjoy."

The following summer, Raleigh dispatched a group of 108 settlers to the coast of present-day North Carolina, where they established a colony on Roanoke Island, building simple shelters within the confines of a protective fort, planting crops, and exploring the vicinity. However, terrible weather – possibly even a hurricane – disease, and attacks from hostile natives doomed the attempt. Within a year the survivors of the venture returned to England.

> To date, no solid evidence has emerged to determine the ultimate fate of the settlers in the failed Roanoke Colony

Undaunted, Raleigh tried again in 1587, sending 118 settlers back to Roanoke under John White. A few weeks later, White returned to England to gather additional supplies. He returned to Roanoke in 1591 to find the colony completely abandoned with no sign of the inhabitants. The cryptic word 'CROATOAN', possibly a reference to another nearby island, had been scratched into a tree. The fate of the Roanoke Colony remains a mystery to this day. Although some historians surmise that the settlers were

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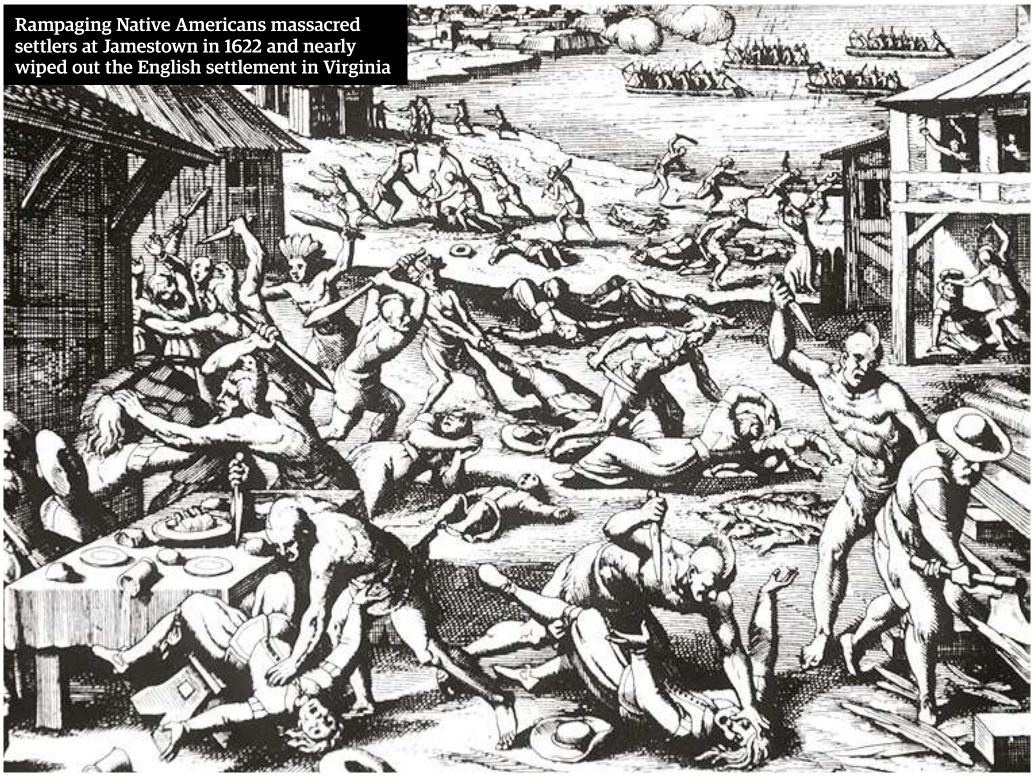


Rampaging Native Americans massacred settlers at Jamestown in 1622 and nearly wiped out the English settlement in Virginia

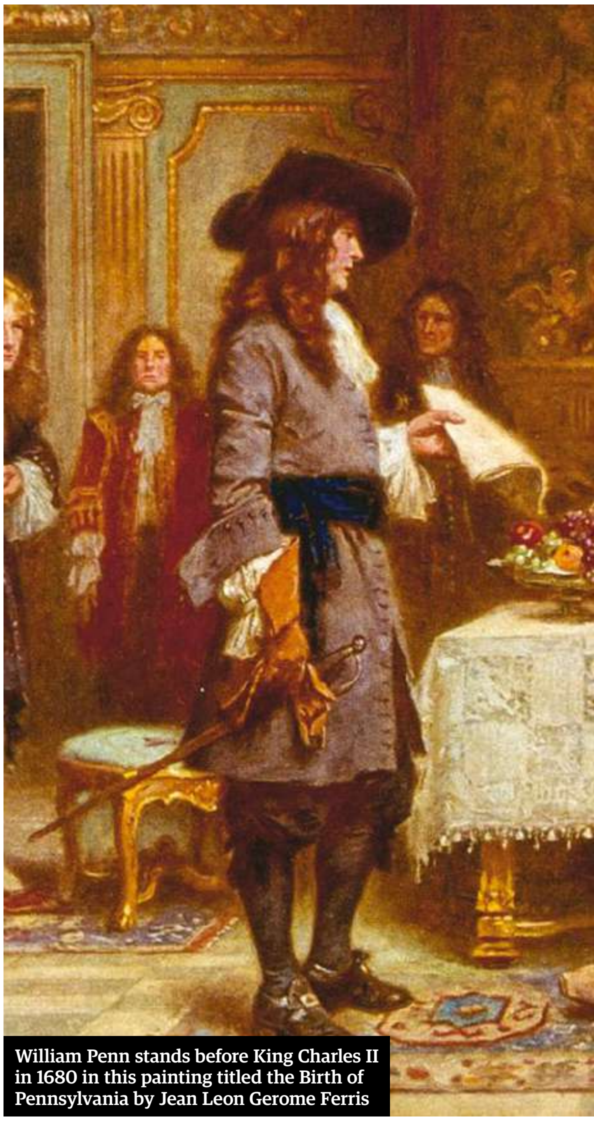
assimilated into the native populations, murdered by them, or were wiped out completely by starvation and disease, no conclusive evidence has been discovered.

The Jamestown Colony was established in 1607, near present-day Williamsburg, after the Virginia Company of London was granted a charter to colonise the eastern part of North America (then known as 'Virginia') by King James I. However, the settlers were ill-prepared to deal with the privations of the wilderness. They constructed a crude fort in the midst of a swamp ridden with clouds of malaria-carrying mosquitoes, struggling to subsist on wild game and crops they planted - a number of the roughly 100 Englishmen were 'gentlemen' unaccustomed to any kind of manual labour.

The beleaguered settlers would likely have starved to death without the assistance of friendly Powhatan tribe, who assisted with agriculture and brought food to them. Even so, nearly 80 per cent of Jamestown's population perished during the harsh winter of 1609-1610, which came to be known as the 'Starving Time'. In 1612, tobacco plants arrived from the West Indies, and the leaf developed into a viable cash crop, helping Jamestown to achieve a degree of permanence. Despite difficult relations with the local natives, which resulted in massacres and reciprocal raiding, the English gained a firm foothold in Virginia.

In 1620, Puritan religious refugees arrived in modern-day Massachusetts aboard the famed ship Mayflower. Popularly known as the 'Pilgrims', these settlers endured equally cruel starvation, hostile natives and disease. However, within a decade the population of the Massachusetts Bay colony had grown to nearly 2,000. For the next 80 years, an influx of English settlers populated the eastern coastline of the North American continent. When private ventures foundered, for example in Virginia in 1624, some territories become crown colonies.

In New Hampshire (part of Massachusetts until 1680), the first colony was founded in 1622. A Maryland colony was established in 1632, followed by others in Connecticut and Rhode Island in 1636. In 1663 Carolina, later divided north and south, was named in honour of King Charles II. Originally settled by Dutch colonists, New Netherland was occupied by the English in 1664 and renamed New Jersey; its port city of New Amsterdam became New York, named after the Duke of York. Pennsylvania was founded by the Quaker William Penn in 1681. Delaware was granted self-government by Pennsylvania in 1682, and in 1732, the crown colony of Georgia was founded as a debtors' refuge.



William Penn stands before King Charles II in 1680 in this painting titled the Birth of Pennsylvania by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris

With the acquiescence of the crown, the colonies elected legislative bodies. Some also

Timeline

1585

- **Misadventure at Roanoke**
  Sir Walter Raleigh, commissioned by Queen Elizabeth, sends settlers to Roanoke Island off the coast of North Carolina. The venture fails twice and the fate of the settlers is unknown.
  1585

- **Virginia Dare is born**
  The first English child born in the Americas, Virginia Dare, arrives to parents Ananias Dare and Eleanor White. She is named after the colony of Virginia.
  18 August 1587

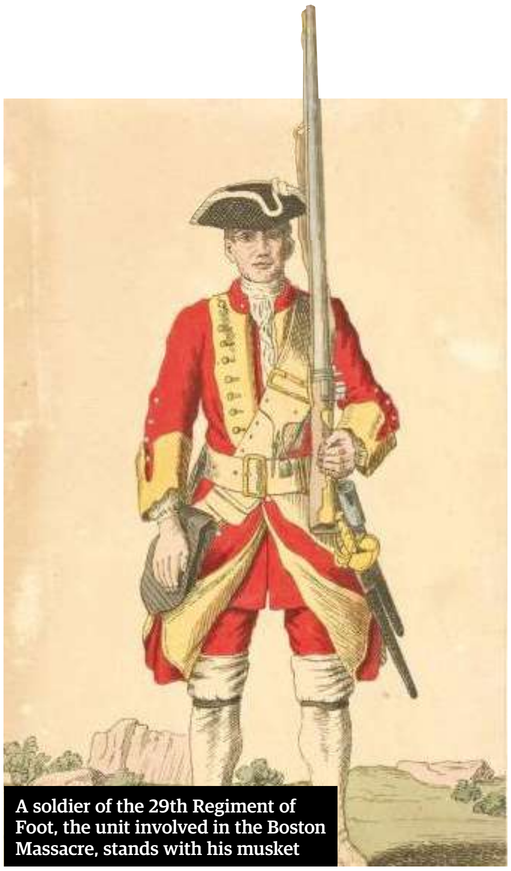
- **Jamestown survives**
  Founders of the first permanent English settlement in North America, the settlers of Jamestown battle famine and hardship to gain a foothold in the New World.
  1607

Statue of Captain John Smith, a leader of the settlers at Jamestown

- **A place for Puritans**
  Seeking freedom to practise their austere form of Christianity, the Puritans arrive at Plymouth in the Massachusetts Bay Colony aboard the ship Mayflower and endure hard times.
  1620

- **The Navigation Acts**
  To ensure that England profits from its investment in the colonies, the first in the series of Navigation Acts is implemented. Initially ignored, the acts are enforced a century later.
  1650

- **War in North America**
  Queen Anne's War, an 11-year extension of the European War of the Spanish Succession, erupts as Britain battles France and Spain; it gains substantial territory in North America.
  1702



A soldier of the 29th Regiment of Foot, the unit involved in the Boston Massacre, stands with his musket

elected governors, while the crown colonies were administered by an appointed governor and his officials. Colonists considered themselves British subjects in every respect.

Despite their common British heritage, the settlers of the 13 North American colonies were a diverse people. The continent was populated by Europeans, natives, and Negro slaves, first introduced by a Portuguese ship at Jamestown in 1619. As the colonies grew and settlement began to inexorably spread westward, the southern colonies developed an agricultural economy as large, prosperous plantations produced cotton and tobacco for export. The middle colonies were distinctive, with many tradesmen, shippers and farmers. In New England, a budding industrial and maritime economy grew. While the colonists remained loyal to the king, a second generation, some of whom never ventured across the Atlantic, had been born and raised in North America.

By 1650, a brisk trade developed between the colonies and with Britain. In distant London, Parliament passed the first of the Navigation Acts, intended to safeguard the flow of goods from the colonies and prevent trade with other nations that might impede the reaping of the nation's long-time investment in North America. Still, officials often looked the other way as smugglers and traders became wealthy while flaunting the statutes. Despite their own significant differences, new wealth, considerable freedom to govern themselves and an adventuresome spirit that compelled them to explore new frontiers fuelled within the colonists a sense of self-identity – something British but distinctly separate, perhaps even 'American'.

To maximise colonial revenues, the Navigation Acts sought to prevent the colonies trading with other nations

Throughout the 18th century, war and peace ebbed and flowed among the great powers of Europe, principally Britain, France and Spain. These

Queen Anne became involved in the war to decide the Spanish succession

- **The Molasses Act**
  In order to raise revenue, Parliament enacts the Molasses Act, a six pence per gallon tax on imports of molasses that did not originate in English colonies.
  March 1733

- **Denouncing Parliament's tyranny**
  As the Navigation Acts are enforced with renewed vigor, James Otis of Massachusetts resigns his post as the king's advocate general and calls the acts "instruments of tyranny."
  1761

- **The French and Indian War ends**
  The French and Indian War ends with British pre-eminence in North America. However, the coffers of the national treasury are depleted, prompting Parliament to seek new sources of revenue.
  1763

Native Americans allied to the French ambush a British column

- **No westward settlement**
  Veterans of the French and Indian War, promised land grants west of the Appalachians, are enraged when Parliament restricts settlement there.
  1763

The Boston Massacre: ironic aftermath

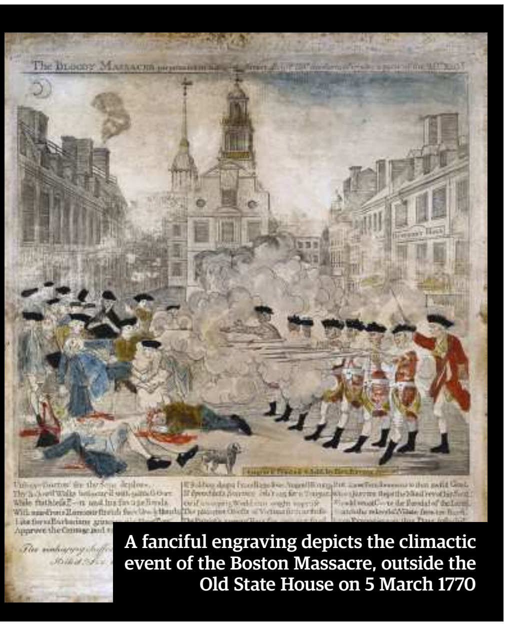
At the time of the Boston Massacre, John Adams was a prominent attorney in the city. He later signed the Declaration of Independence, served as a delegate to the Continental Congress, and became the first vice president of the United States and the country's second president.

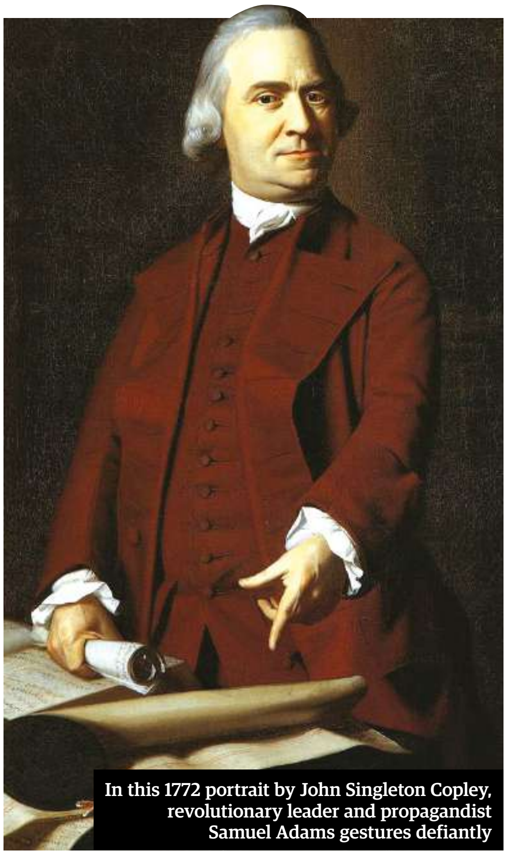
The so-called Boston Massacre was the result of a mob taunting a group of British soldiers until they feared for their lives and fired into the crowd. In its aftermath, Adams served as counsel for the defence as eight British soldiers were tried on charges of murdering five Bostonians. He was also defence co-counsel for the separate murder trial - from 24 October 1770 - of Captain Thomas Preston, commander of the troops.

The issue was whether Preston had ordered the soldiers to fire. After five days of testimony, the jury returned a verdict of not guilty. A majority of the jurors were Loyalists, and just two were actually from Boston.

A month later, the eight soldiers stood trial on five counts of murder in Massachusetts' Superior Court of Judicature. On 5 December, six were acquitted. Two, Montgomery and Kilroy, were convicted on a reduced charge of manslaughter for killing two of the demonstrators. Both were branded with the letter M for murder on the right thumb and rejoined their regiment.

No civil unrest followed the verdicts. On the third anniversary of the 'massacre', Adams wrote in his diary, "It was… one of the most gallant, generous, manly and disinterested Actions of my whole Life, and one of the best Pieces of Service I ever rendered my Country."


A fanciful engraving depicts the climactic event of the Boston Massacre, outside the Old State House on 5 March 1770


In this 1772 portrait by John Singleton Copley, revolutionary leader and propagandist Samuel Adams gestures defiantly

> "A military presence in North America was still required to maintain a tenuous peace with hostile native tribes"

conflicts spread to North America as each power sought to expand its colonial empire. No fewer than four major conflicts erupted between 1689 and 1755. The most decisive of these, the French and Indian War - an extension of the Seven Years' War in Europe - ended with a British victory in 1763. Nearly 150 years of French colonisation in the New World was extinguished.

The great victory, however, had come at a tremendous price. The British Empire extended halfway around the world, and the financial burden of the prolonged wars had more than doubled the national debt. Parliament's attempts to increase taxes in Britain were met with violence in the streets of London. Predictably, the eyes of Parliament were cast across the sea to the prosperous colonies. Without question, the wars had been won with an army and navy financed by British taxpayers. A military presence in North America was still required to maintain a tenuous peace with hostile native tribes. The colonists had built a thriving economy with the tremendous assistance of the crown and the country. Should they themselves not bear at least some of the burden, and pay for their own security and continuing prosperity?

Enacting a new policy toward the colonies, King George III, who remarked that he intended to "rule as well as reign," and Parliament sought to pacify Native American tribes with a 1763 proclamation that forbade the further settlement of lands west of the Appalachian Mountains. Strict enforcement of the existing Navigation Acts shut down previously profitable trade as seizures of property and searches of warehouses occurred without warrants. The old Molasses Act of 1733 was bolstered in 1764 with the Sugar Act, a direct threat to the lucrative rum trade carried on for years with the West Indies. In 1765, the Quartering Act asserted that 10,000 British troops would be stationed in the colonies and that the colonists themselves were responsible for their food, shelter and other needs.

That same year, the Stamp Act required any printed material in the colonies, from newspapers

The hated Stamp Act
One of numerous tax measures enacted by Parliament, the Stamp Act becomes the focus of riots in the colonies and a petition to King George III for relief from the provision.
1765

The Townshend Acts
Taxes on staples and everyday items in the colonies, including tin, tea, lead and other products, are enacted. Collectively, they bear the name of chancellor of the exchequer Charles Townshend.
1767

The Boston Massacre
Outside the Old State House, British soldiers are repeatedly harassed by an angry mob hurling snowballs, stones and insults. They fire into the crowd, killing five.
5 March 1770

A modern image of the Old State House, site of the Boston Massacre

Burning of Gaspee
After running aground while chasing the colonial packet ship Hannah, the customs schooner Gaspee is boarded and set afire by a cluster of irate Rhode Islanders in defiance of the Navigation Acts.
10 June 1772

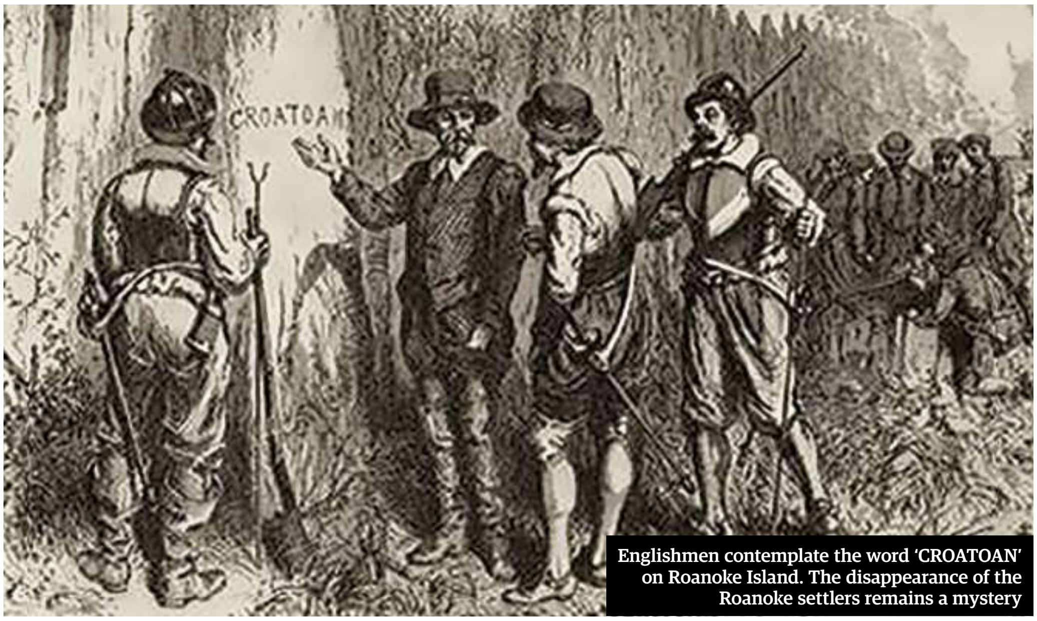
The raiders row away from the burning hulk of the customs schooner Gaspee

to playing cards, to bear a royal stamp after the payment of a tax. In October 1765, representatives of nine colonies convened in New York to denounce the Stamp Act and organise a general boycott of goods imported from Britain. The outright defiance of the crown worked. The repeal of the Stamp Act in March 1766 was hailed as a triumph among colonists and no doubt contributed to the rising tide of separatist thought, even an American spirit rather than a 'Virginian' or 'New Yorker' perspective.

Firebrands, radicals and even-tempered statesmen alike were alarmed at the apparent tidal wave of taxation that continued even in the wake of the Stamp Act's repeal, particularly since the colonists themselves had no direct representatives in Parliament. 'No taxation without representation' became a familiar cry. In the great seaport of Boston, Massachusetts, Samuel Adams, a career politician, and John Hancock, a wealthy shipping magnate, subverted tax laws whenever possible, even assembling a group of activists called the Sons of Liberty to demonstrate, raid and otherwise harass the crown's interests in the colonies. In Virginia, the fiery and eloquent Patrick Henry railed against the excesses of the far-off government.

Nevertheless, Parliament persisted. Within months of the repeal of the Stamp Act, the Townshend Acts of 1767, named after chancellor of the exchequer Charles Townshend, imposed a litany of new taxes on a number of essential goods, including paper, tea, lead, glass and other popular commodities. Protests increased, and violence erupted. And the distance between crown and colonies grew. Then, on 5 March 1770, the same day as the horrific Boston Massacre, Parliament drew back from the brink of rebellion again, repealing all the Townshend Acts except the tax on tea.

Civil unrest continued as demonstrators in Rhode Island burned a customs schooner to the waterline, tax collectors were driven from their homes, and some were even tarred and feathered. In Boston, three ships loaded with tea rode at anchor in the harbour on the night of 16 December 1773. Massachusetts royal governor Thomas Hutchinson was determined to collect import taxes on the cargo before the ships would be allowed to sail back to England, their holds still full.



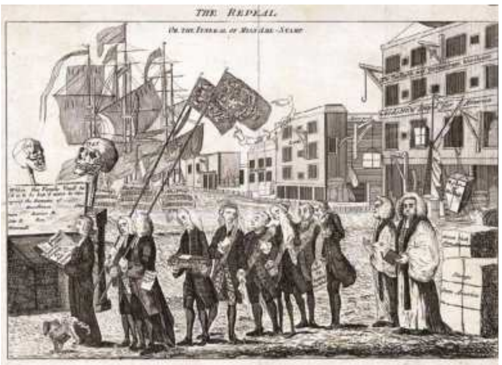
Englishmen contemplate the word 'CROATOAN' on Roanoke Island. The disappearance of the Roanoke settlers remains a mystery

That night, the Sons of Liberty boarded the vessels and tossed chest after chest of tea into the waters of the harbour. The so-called Boston Tea Party became one of the most significant events leading to the outbreak of armed revolution.

In response, Parliament closed the port of Boston, enacted martial law and brought an army of occupation into the city, billeting soldiers in private homes. The colonists referred to these Parliamentary directives and others as the Intolerable Acts.

Following the events of the Boston Tea Party, Parliament closed the port and brought in an armed occupation force

British prime minister Lord North declared, "The New England governments are in a state of rebellion… [but] four or five frigates will do business without any military force." While Parliament made plans to crush the colonial insolence, aid poured into Boston from across the colonies. The Massachusetts State House issued a call for the colonists to collectively address their myriad grievances against the crown. From 5 September through 26 October 1774, the first Continental Congress met in Philadelphia. A total of 56 delegates were in attendance, and only the colony of Georgia was not represented.



This cartoon depicts the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1766 as a funeral. Parliament backed down after protests

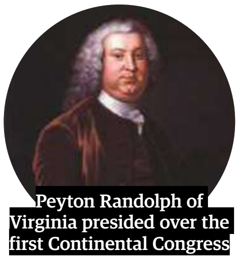
Patrick Henry rose and proclaimed, "The distinctions between Virginians, Pennsylvanians, New Yorkers and New Englanders are no more. I am not a Virginian, but an American!"

The first Continental Congress adopted the Suffolk Resolves, listing the colonial disputes with Parliament and King George III and pledged to meet again in May 1775 if satisfactory remedies were not achieved. Before the second Congress convened, however, open rebellion had broken out on Lexington Green.

A tea monopoly
Parliament awards a monopoly on the sale of tea to the debt-burdened East India Company. Despite some pricing benefits, colonists still resent the imposition of a tea tax.
Spring 1773

The Boston Tea Party
Raiders dressed as native tribesmen board ships in Boston harbour and toss chests of tea into the water in protest of the tea tax. In repsonse, Parliament closes the port of Boston.
16 December 1773

First Continental Congress
Delegates from 12 of the 13 British colonies in North America convene in Philadelphia to consider a response to Parliamentary oppression.
5 September 1774



Peyton Randolph of Virginia presided over the first Continental Congress

London merchants seek relief
Beleaguered by colonial boycotts, London merchants fear the outbreak of a revolution and petition King George III to initiate better relations with colonists.
1775

1775

Lord North's conciliatory plan
Parliament approves prime minister Lord North's plan to allow colonial assemblies to levy taxes for their own maintenance and protection. Word does not reach the colonies before the revolution begins.
February 1775

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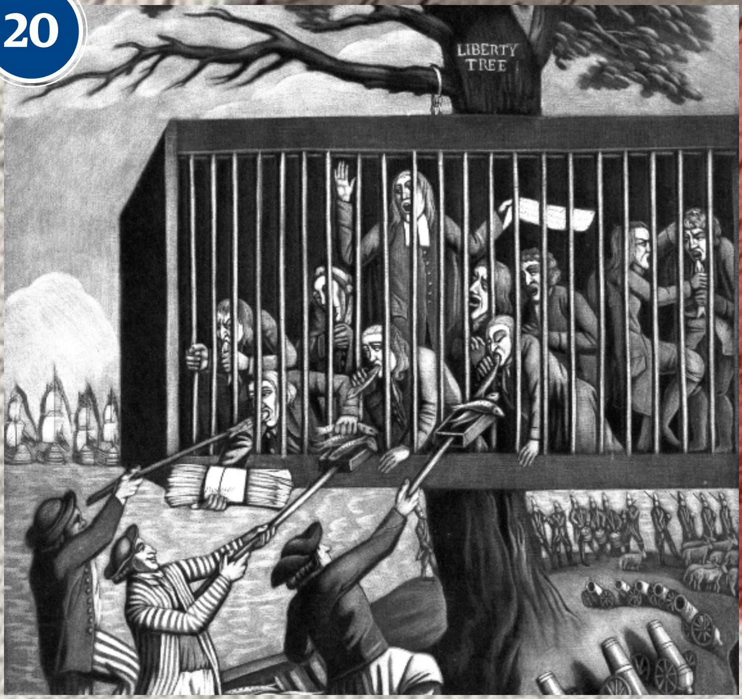

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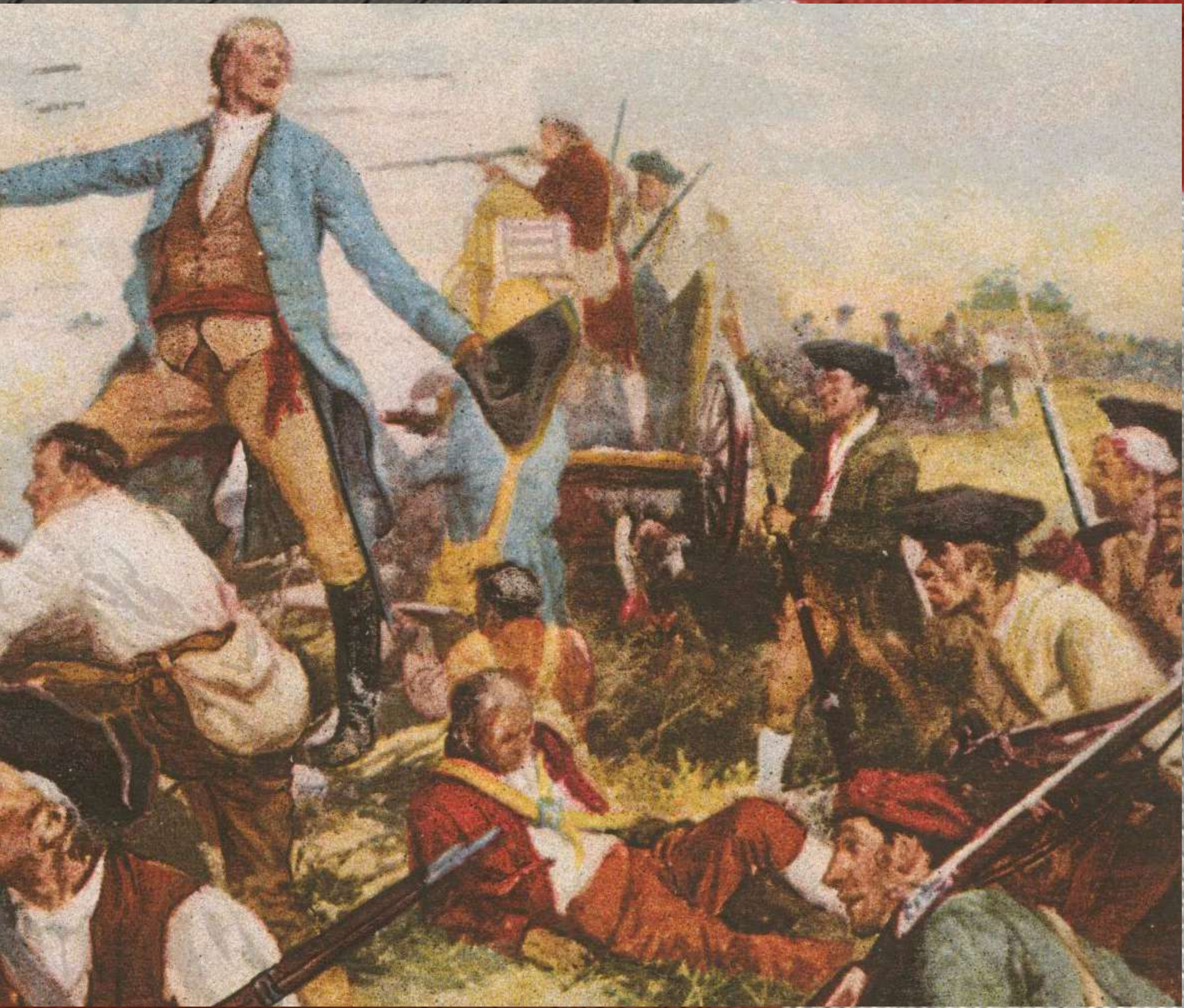

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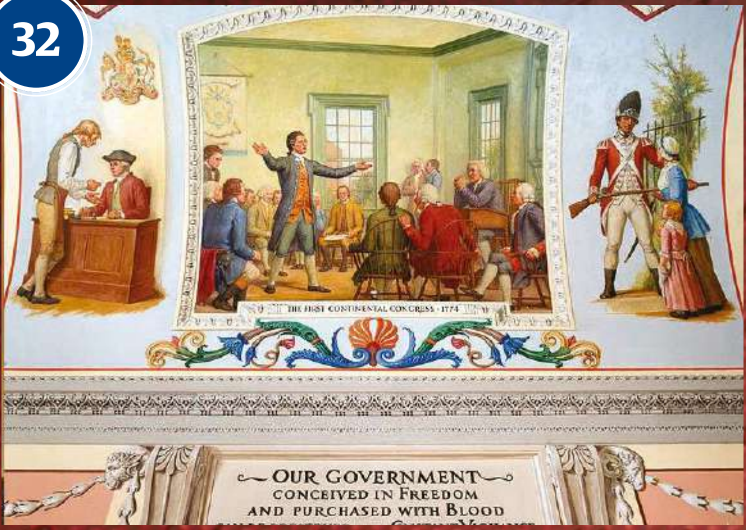
THE FIRST CONTINENTAL CONGRESS · 1774
OUR GOVERNMENT
CONCEIVED IN FREEDOM
AND PURCHASED WITH BLOOD

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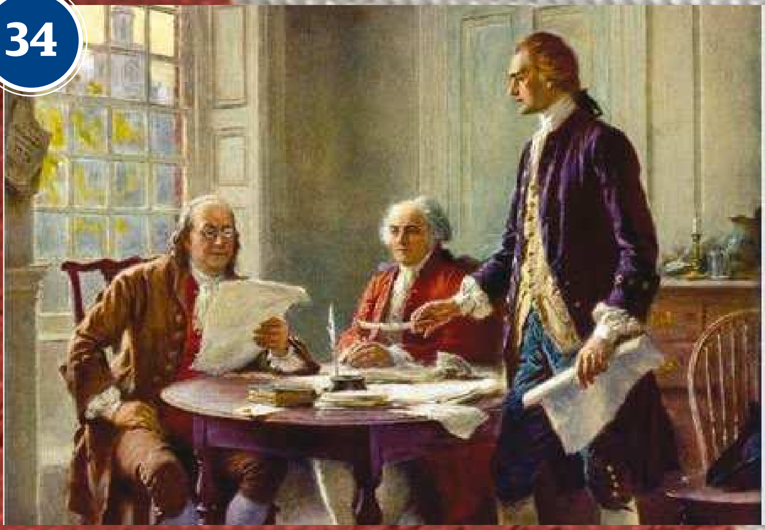


The French and Indian War

The Seven Years' War united Britain and America before dividing them again

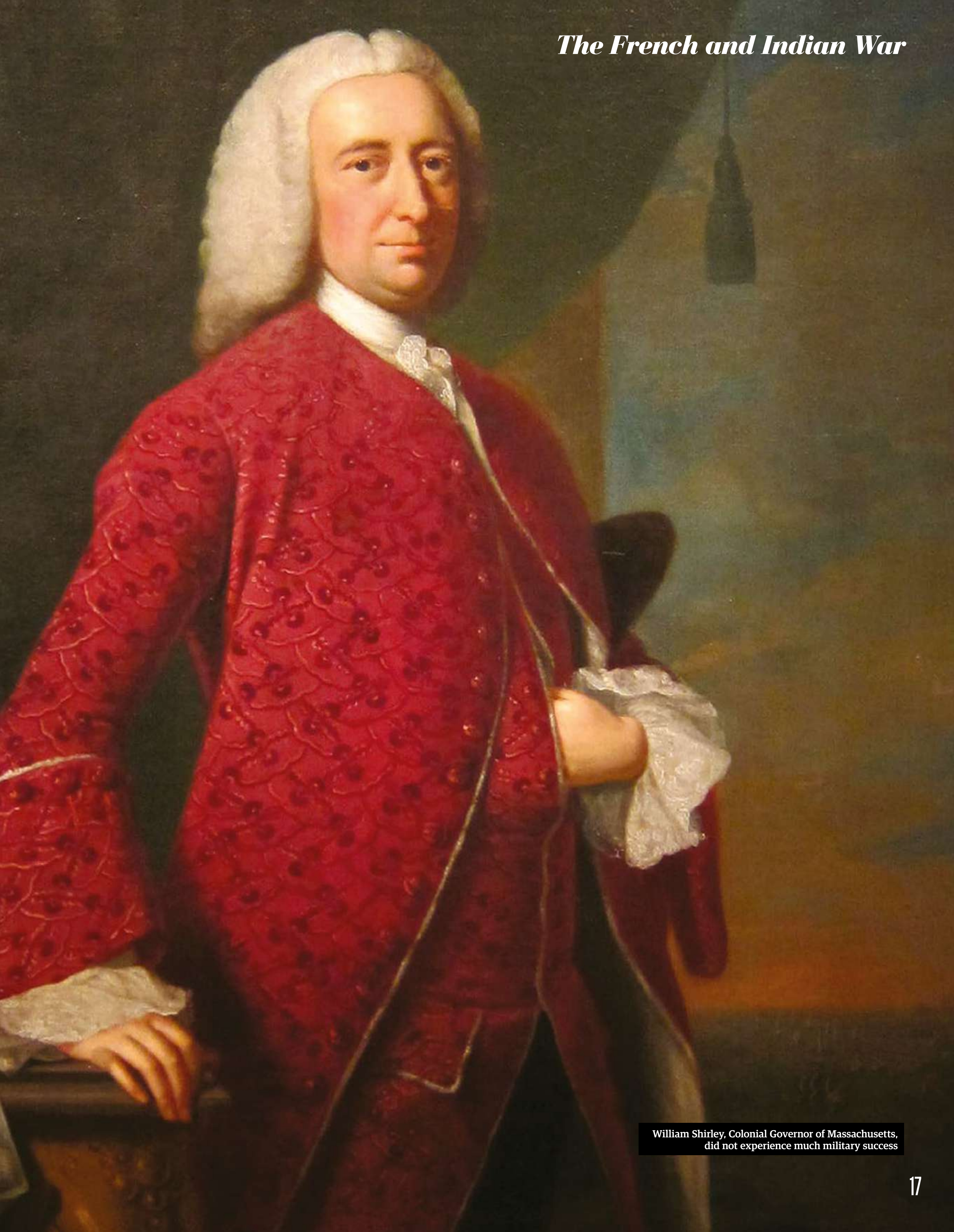
On 28 May 1754, a small party of Virginian colonial militia, led by the young Lieutenant Colonel George Washington, quietly approached an under-construction fort in a French-claimed territory in rural Pennsylvania. A small party of Native American Mingo warriors accompanied them. They had been sent by their British superiors to protect the garrison and the surrounding area from French-Canadian forces who, naturally enough, were resistant to British-American encroachment on land under French control.

A Canadian contingent had driven away the construction crew, and the French-Canadian commander Joseph Coulon de Villiers de Jumonville had warned against retaliation. As Washington and his militia closed in on the fort, in direct opposition to that advice, they could have had no idea of the repercussions of what was about to take place. Later dubbed the Jumonville Affair - or the Battle of Jumonville Glen - it saw Washington's militia ambush 35 Canadian troops in the area, killing several, including Jumonville. It was the flashpoint that sparked the French and Indian War, itself the North American theatre of the Seven Years' War: a worldwide conflict later dubbed by some historians as World War Zero. The conflict brought Britain and its American colonies closer together than they had ever been in the past, but ultimately helped to drive them apart.

> The European nations declared war on one another, turning the regional affair into an international one

The Jumonville Affair was a typical example of the frontier tensions ongoing in North America at the time, where both British and French colonial forces were seeking to extend and consolidate their spheres of influence in the frontier regions. The immediate aftermath of Jumonville Glen saw Washington retreat several miles to establish Fort Necessity, which the Canadians attacked in retaliation for Jumonville in July. Washington was forced to surrender. News of the two battles eventually reached Britain, and after several months of debate and negotiation, the decision was taken to send troops under the command of Major General Edward Braddock to confront and remove the French. Learning of this, the French king Louis XV deployed six of his own regiments to the frontier in early 1755, their fleet sailing before the British could blockade France's ports. Frequent hostile engagements at sea between the French and the British in the coming months - including the British capture of the French vessel *Alcide* in June - eventually led the two countries to formally declare a state of war.

The early months of the war were not auspicious for Britain. Braddock managed quickly to alienate potential Native American allies and British-American colonial leaders, and was then killed in a disastrous attempt to capture the French Fort Duquesne in the area that's now Pittsburgh. Massachusetts governor William Shirley assumed command of the British forces, and was tasked with defending Fort Oswego in the Great Lakes region and attacking the French Fort Niagara - neither of which he accomplished. The former was destroyed by cannon fire from 3,000 French troops in August 1756, while the latter did eventually fall to the



William Shirley, Colonial Governor of Massachusetts, did not experience much military success

> "As the French struggled, the British rallied, thanks in no small part to a new political force at home"

British, but three years later under the command of Brigadier General John Prideaux.

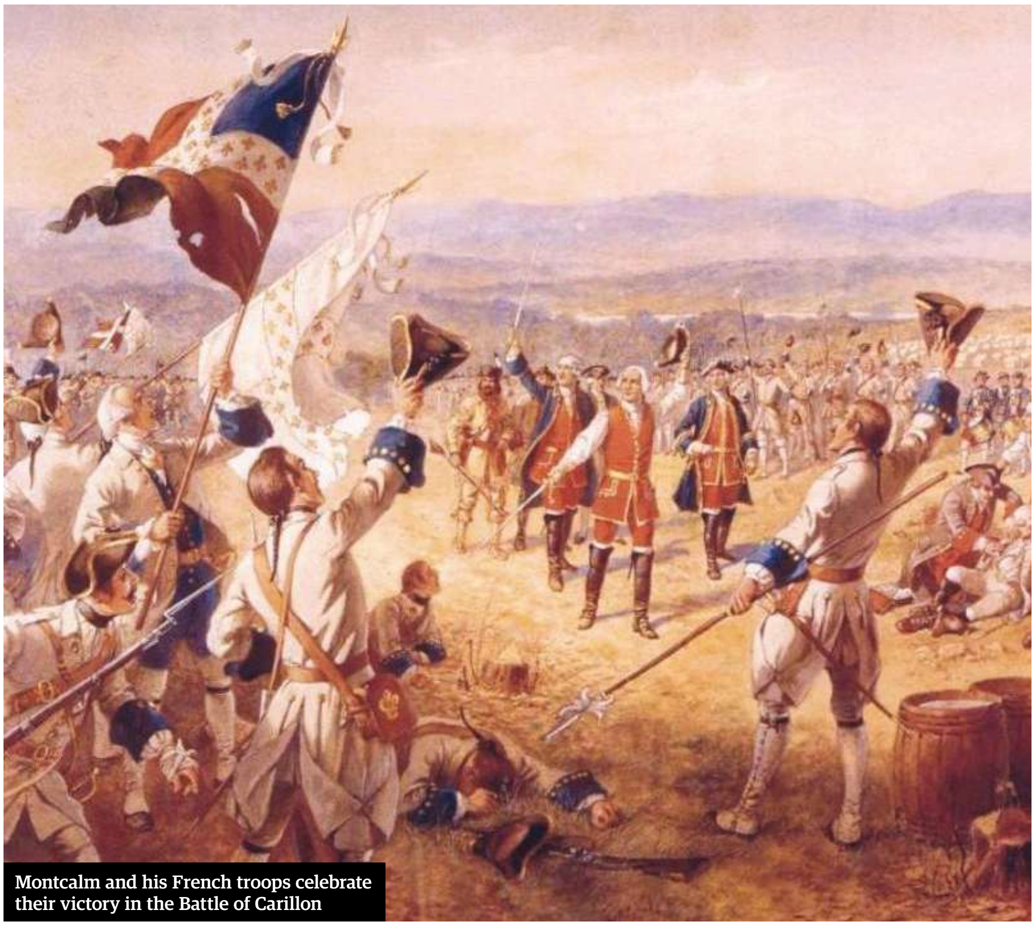
More successful than Shirley was Sir William Johnson, who was tasked with the capture of Fort St-Frédéric in New York. The fort was actually destroyed by the French themselves as they abandoned it, but the site subsequently became that of the fearsome British installation Fort Crown Point. Johnson's 1,500 colonial troops and around 200 Mohawk warriors then engaged an equal number of French, Canadian and Indian troops at the bloody Battle of Lake George, emerging victorious and advancing Britain's territorial gains significantly. The British colonel Robert Monckton made similarly important gains at around the same time in the French colonies then known as Acadia.

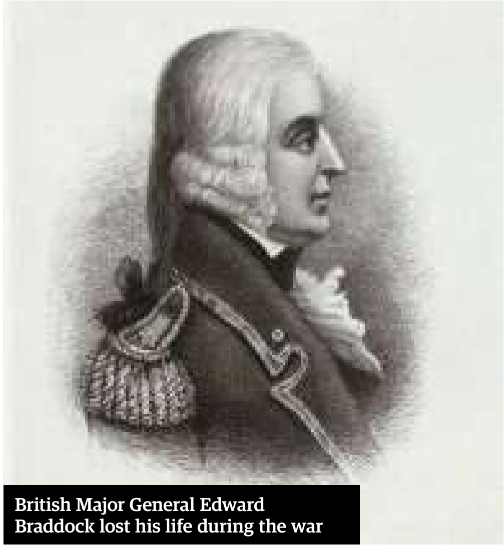
Despite some losses, however, the French were also engineering significant victories. Outnumbered twenty-to-one by the British, they had bolstered their numbers by allying with the majority of the Native American tribes, including the Abenaki, Mi'kmaq, Algonquin, Lenape, Ojibwa, Ottawa, Shawnee and Wyandot (the Iroquois, Catawba and Cherokee largely sided with the British, although they didn't maintain those alliances simultaneously). Scouts reporting on the weakness of the British supply chain had identified the British-held Fort Bull on Lake Ontario as a key strategic target, destroying it and 45,000 pounds of British gunpowder in the first of copious successful French and Indian raids on the New York frontier and the Ohio Valley. The aforementioned victory at Fort Oswego followed, as did the Siege of Fort William Henry, where the French commander-in-chief Louis-Joseph de Montcalm descended with 7,000 of his troops on the British garrison and forced their surrender and withdrawal. An impressive and important milestone for the French, it was nevertheless tainted by the horrific massacre that followed.

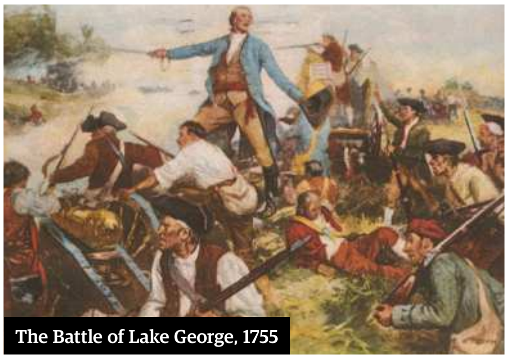
But circumstances contrived to hinder the French efforts. The British blockade of French ports meant resupply was difficult. A poor harvest and a harsh winter in the North American "New France" in 1757 made the problem worse, and the French loyalist Native American tribes were laid low in 1758 by a virulent outbreak of smallpox. As the French struggled, the British rallied, thanks in no small part to a new political force at home: the alliance of Prime Minister Thomas Pelham-Holles, 1st Duke of Newcastle, with his powerful secretary of state William Pitt. With Pitt directing defence and foreign policy, and Pelham-Holles backing him to the hilt financially, several major military offensives were conceived and put into effect.

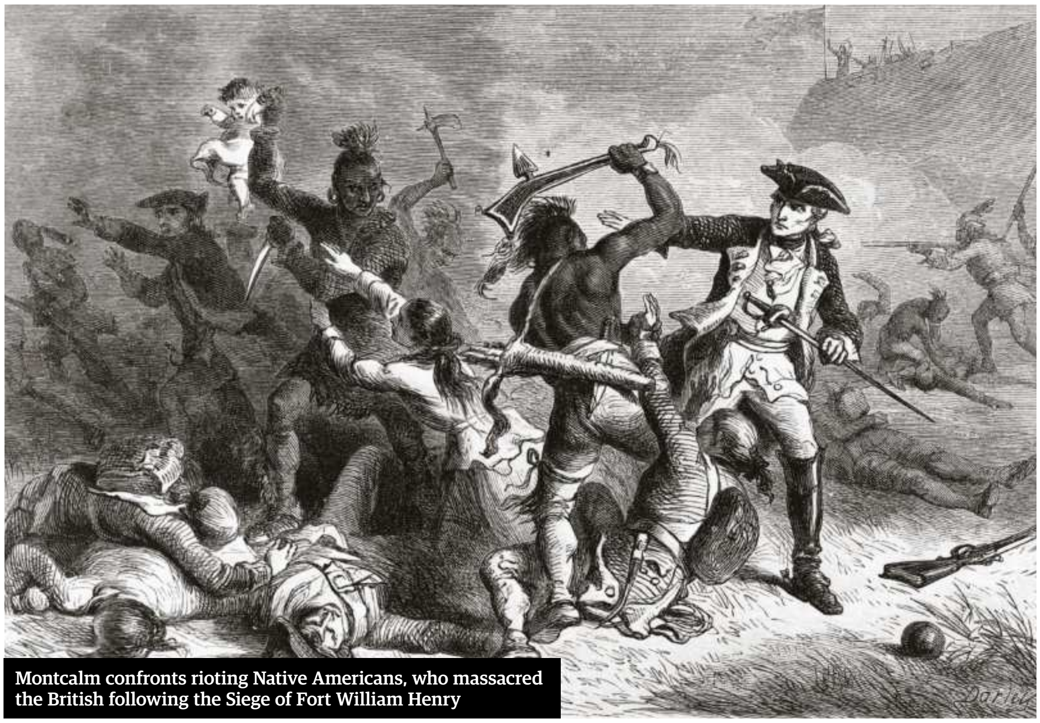
What followed was the so-called "Annus Mirabilis" or "Year of Miracles" of 1759, in which the British dominated the conflict with a string of successes, and the French were distracted by and financially beholden to conflicts in other areas, depleting their North American presence. The British captured Fort Ticonderoga (AKA Fort Carillon) at New York – an important stronghold that remained in British hands until the Revolutionary War. They drove the French from Ohio, and won a battle at the Plains of Abraham, leading to the British seizure of Quebec City. And British supremacy wasn't limited to North America. The Empire also made decisive gains against the French in India, the West Indies, Germany, Spain and France itself. The politician Horace Walpole boasted, "Our bells are worn threadbare with ringing for victories!"

In North America, the conflict had largely reached its finish by 1760 (although it continued in Europe), but was only formally ended three years later by the Treaty of Paris. The Treaty of Hubertusburg brought the broader Seven Years' War to its conclusion in the rest of the world at more or less the same time. Britain offered


Montcalm and his French troops celebrate their victory in the Battle of Carillon


British Major General Edward Braddock lost his life during the war

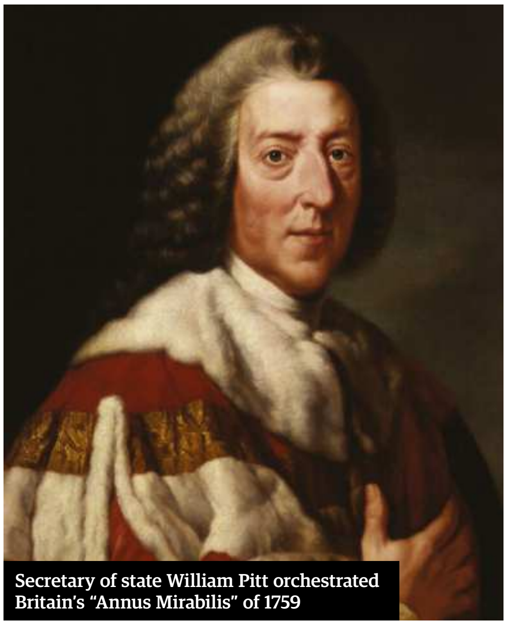

The Battle of Lake George, 1755



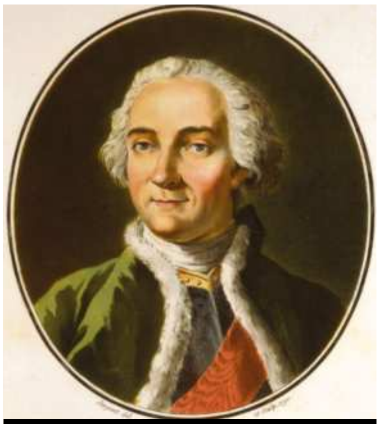
Montcalm confronts rioting Native Americans, who massacred the British following the Siege of Fort William Henry

France the opportunity either to surrender its interests in North America or the Caribbean. France chose to cede the former, but negotiated retaining some fishing rights and two small islands off Newfoundland. Britain gained substantial territories in Canada and what's now New England, as well as 80,000 new French-speaking colonial subjects, about 11,500 of whom were expelled. Their "resettlement" (mostly in France, but to some extent in New Orleans and other parts of colonial North America) made land available to American colonists and new immigrants from Europe. In France, the ignominious defeat and extreme financial cost of the war directly led to the weakening of the monarchy, sowing the seeds of the French Revolution that would bloom in 1789.

For the Native American tribes who had allied with the French, the new political situation was problematic, worsening their status – to many British and American eyes – as aliens within their own country. Inter-tribal tensions were also provoked, since, as was the case with the Choctaw and Creek, for example, tribes were now often competing to settle the same land. In Britain, while the result of the Seven Years' War was obviously a cause for celebration, there were dire financial repercussions as there had been in France: the war had almost doubled Britain's national debt, and given it substantial new territories to manage. Paradoxically, it caused a paradigm shift in British-American relations. Whereas previously Americans had been viewed by the British as favoured cousins and fellow citizens on the other side of the Atlantic, and had fought alongside their colonial "masters" against a common enemy, now they were merely one territory of many. America was now just another subject to be governed, and its citizens began to find British rule increasingly high-handed. Not least of the controversies was the exponential increase in taxation of the colonies by the British Crown and parliament, as a way of refilling the British coffers. The Currency Act deprived several colonies of cash in favour of British merchants. A 1764 Revenue Act raised taxes on imported molasses, prior to the Townshend Acts' various taxations of imported glass, lead, paper, paint and tea. The Mutiny Act required colonial assemblies to accommodate British military regiments wherever the British saw fit to billet, and to foot the bill for doing so. The Stamp Act added a charge to all newspapers and legal documents. Resistance to these impositions led to the increased visibility of British troops in the colonies to enforce compliance. Another war, America's own revolution in pursuit of its independence, was only a few brief years away.



Secretary of state William Pitt orchestrated Britain's "Annus Mirabilis" of 1759



French general Louis-Joseph de Montcalm led the troops who initiated the massacre

The Fort William Henry Massacre

French-Indian alliances were not always straightforward

The massacre at Fort William Henry in August 1757 was one of the most infamous events of the entire French and Indian War, resulting in the death or injury of 200 British troops and their families, after the British had surrendered to the French.

The French general Louis-Joseph de Montcalm was the mastermind of the siege of the British fort. An important, but poorly supported, strategic installation on the frontier between British New York and French Canada, it gave the British the perfect launching point for attacking the French Fort Ticonderoga (AKA Fort Carillon). Leading the British troops garrisoned at William Henry was Lieutenant Colonel George Monro.

Montcalm assembled a force of 6,000 French troops, substantially bolstered by nearly 2,000 Native American warriors. Several days of bombardment followed, with Monro denied reinforcements by his superior Lieutenant General Daniel Webb, and instructed instead to negotiate the best terms possible.

Montcalm's acceptance of Monro's surrender allowed the British the opportunity to safely withdraw under French escort. But the native tribes, some of whom did not culturally understand the surrender, and some of whom had been previously resentful at being denied the opportunity to loot vanquished British installations, began plundering the fort and attacking the mostly defenceless evacuees. An estimated ten per cent of the surrendered British were slaughtered.

Webb was reprimanded afterwards for his cowardice in failing to intercede, and Monro died of apoplexy brought on by the massacre. Montcalm apologised. The events are depicted in James Fenimore Cooper's famous novel *The Last Of The Mohicans*, and in Michael Mann's epic 1991 film adaptation.

Acts, taxes and turmoil

A series of parliamentary taxes and other legislation brought Great Britain into conflict with its restive North American colonies

The great powers of Europe engaged in empire-building for centuries, exploring, settling, and then exploiting and plundering their far-flung colonies. Inevitably, conflict ensued, and between 1689 and 1755 no fewer than four major wars erupted between them. By 1763, Great Britain had emerged victorious from the latest of these, the Seven Years' War.

Among other gains, Britain had extinguished 150 years of French colonisation and economic influence in North America, where the conflict had been known as the French and Indian War. Nevertheless, as difficult as the war had been, there were also problems with the peace. Victory had come at a tremendous price. The British national debt had more than doubled in wartime, and the burden of the expense fell squarely on the common citizenry.

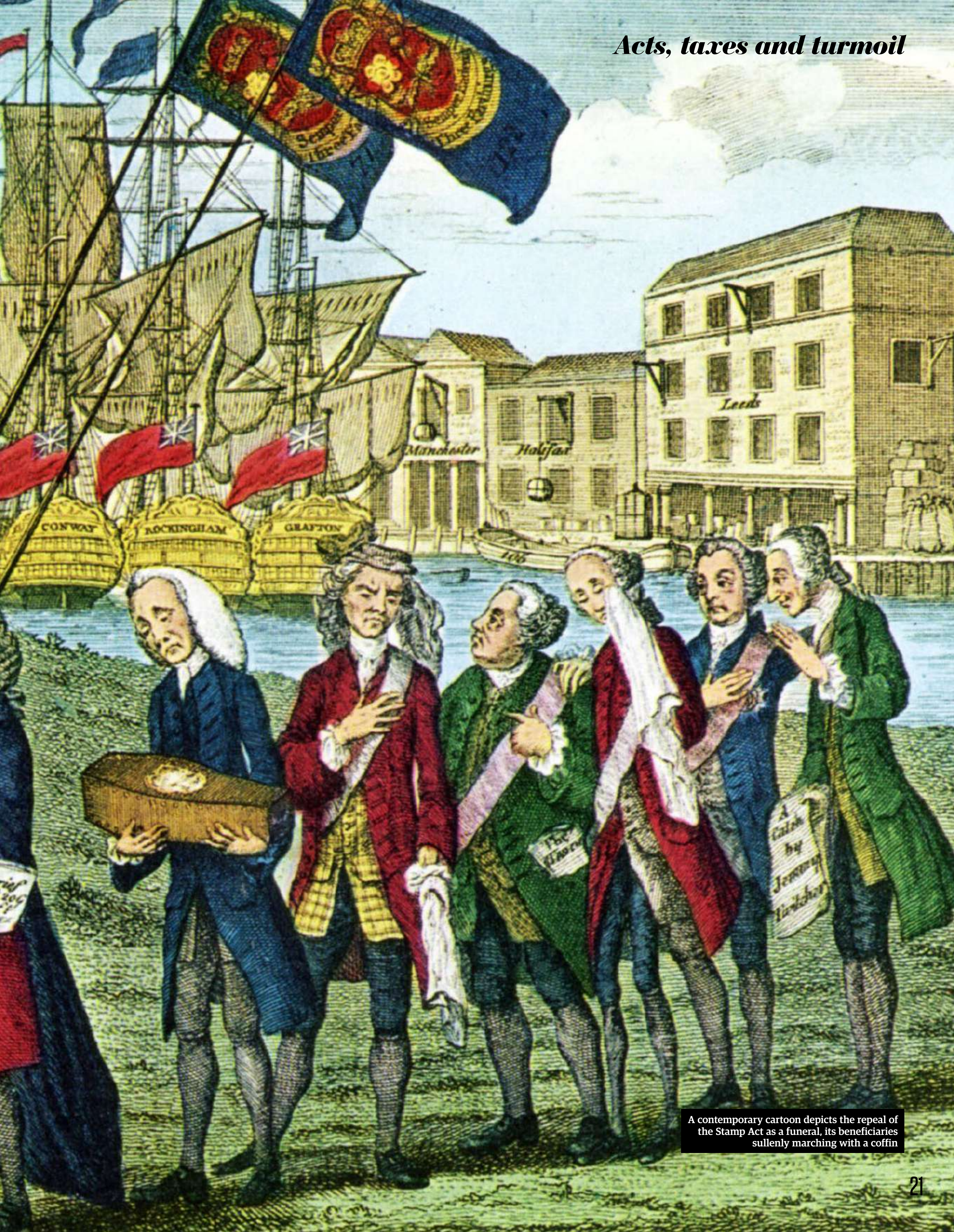
Examining options for revenue enhancement, the eyes of parliament then focused sharply on the 13 North American colonies. Their inhabitants were subjects of the Crown who had benefitted from the protection of the British Army and the Royal Navy in the recent fighting - not to mention the continuing requirement to maintain a military presence to ward off hostile Native Americans. It was only logical that the colonists should bear a reasonable share of the associated costs through a system of taxation.

Tumult and trade

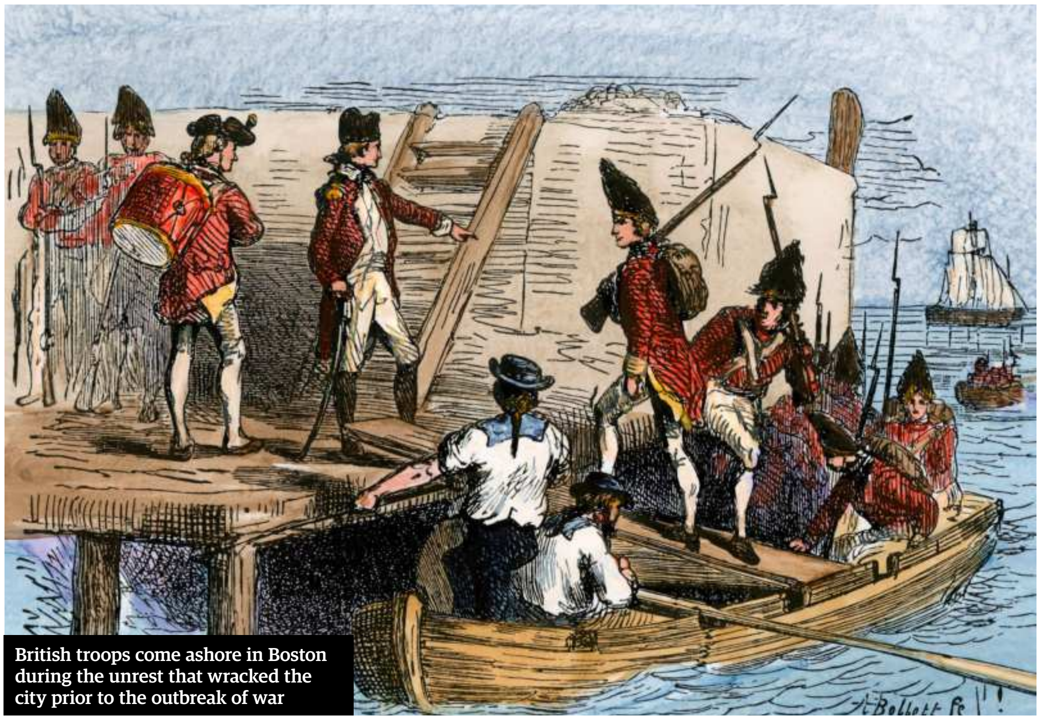
Amid the growing prosperity of the colonies, the British parliament had previously moved to regulate the brisk and profitable trade between America and the mother country. The Navigation Acts, first proffered in 1651, were intended to preserve the benefits of such commerce for the good of the Empire. Nevertheless, officials were lax in their enforcement of the Navigation Acts, generally looking the other way as merchants trafficked in contraband, a robust black market developed, and businessmen on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean lined their pockets. At the same time, duties on trade goods that were imported into the colonies from Britain were common.

Soon enough, however, the character of the American colonies and their relationship with parliament in far-off London began to change. Time, distance, war, and both economic prosperity and hardship conspired to shape the course of events. Although the majority of colonists professed loyalty to the Crown, an inevitable identification as "New Yorkers" or "Virginians" was emerging, along with the subsequent awakening of a uniquely American spirit.

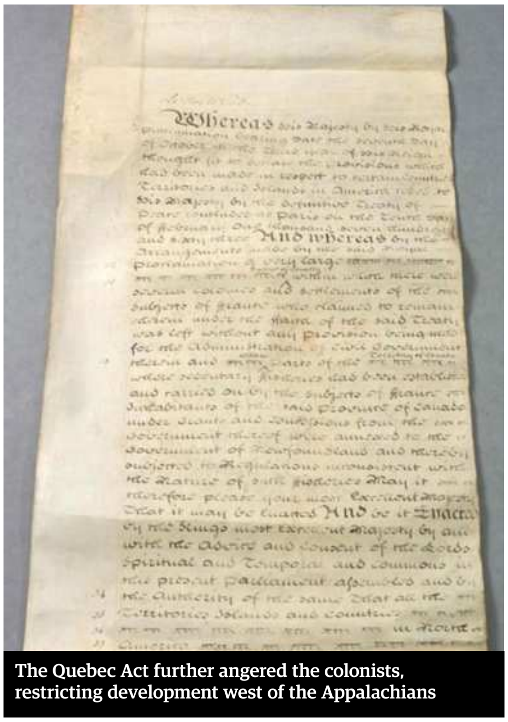
With the end of the French and Indian War, King George III had pledged to "rule as well as reign," and the Proclamation of 1763 forbade colonial settlement west of the Appalachian Mountains in order to pacify the apprehensive Native American tribes of the Northwest Territory who had fought side-by-side with the British and feared encroachment on their lands. A year later, the Sugar Act imposed new duties on sugar and other commodities routinely imported in the colonies. While colonial leaders groused that the


CONWAY
ROCKINGHAM
GRAFTON
Manchester
Halifax
Leeds

A contemporary cartoon depicts the repeal of the Stamp Act as a funeral, its beneficiaries sullenly marching with a coffin



British troops come ashore in Boston during the unrest that wracked the city prior to the outbreak of war



The Quebec Act further angered the colonists, restricting development west of the Appalachians

proclamation was evidence of parliamentary overreach in North American affairs, the Sugar Act caused prices to rise and threatened the lucrative rum trade with the West Indies. There was more to come. British restrictions on colonial trade tightened with sterner enforcement of the old Navigation Acts and the dusty Molasses Act of 1733. In 1765, the Quartering Act decreed that 10,000 British soldiers were to be stationed in the colonies and that the colonists were directly responsible for their maintenance and upkeep.

The hated Stamp Act

Also in 1765, Prime Minister George Grenville proposed the first direct tax on the North American colonies. Parliament passed the Stamp Act with little fanfare or trepidation of its consequences, and in the autumn of that year, all printed documents, from newspapers to wills, deeds, pamphlets, licenses and playing cards, were required to bear a royal stamp as evidence of a tax being paid. In October 1765, a conference of delegates from nine colonies met in New York City to denounce the Stamp Act. Objecting forcefully, the colonists complained that only their own assemblies had the right to impose direct taxes and that they were voiceless in parliament.

"No taxation without representation!" became a common cry, but parliament countered that it did in fact represent all subjects of the Crown wherever they resided. The New York convention proposed a boycott of goods imported from Britain, and in March 1766, parliament relented, repealing the Stamp Act. However, the gesture was accompanied by the Declaratory Act, reminding the colonists that parliament reserved the right to levy future taxes as it saw fit.

> "Parliament recoiled from the violence and repealed all of the taxes levied under the Townshend Acts"

Townshend's misstep

Charles Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer, believed that colonial leaders had rebelled against the Stamp Act because of its direct nature. He falsely reasoned that additional indirect duties on imports from Britain would meet with little opposition. In 1767, Townshend introduced a series of new taxes on staple goods such as lead, paint, glass, paper and tea that landed in the colonies from Britain.

Again, an outcry arose among the colonists, accompanied at times by demonstrations and violence in the streets. The most effective means of opposition to the Townshend Acts was the boycott. Colonial legislative bodies imposed drastic curtailments on the consumption of British goods, and "committees of correspondence" enforced compliance from New England in the north to Georgia in the south. By 1769, colonial imports of British goods had been slashed to such a degree that the economy in the mother country staggered.

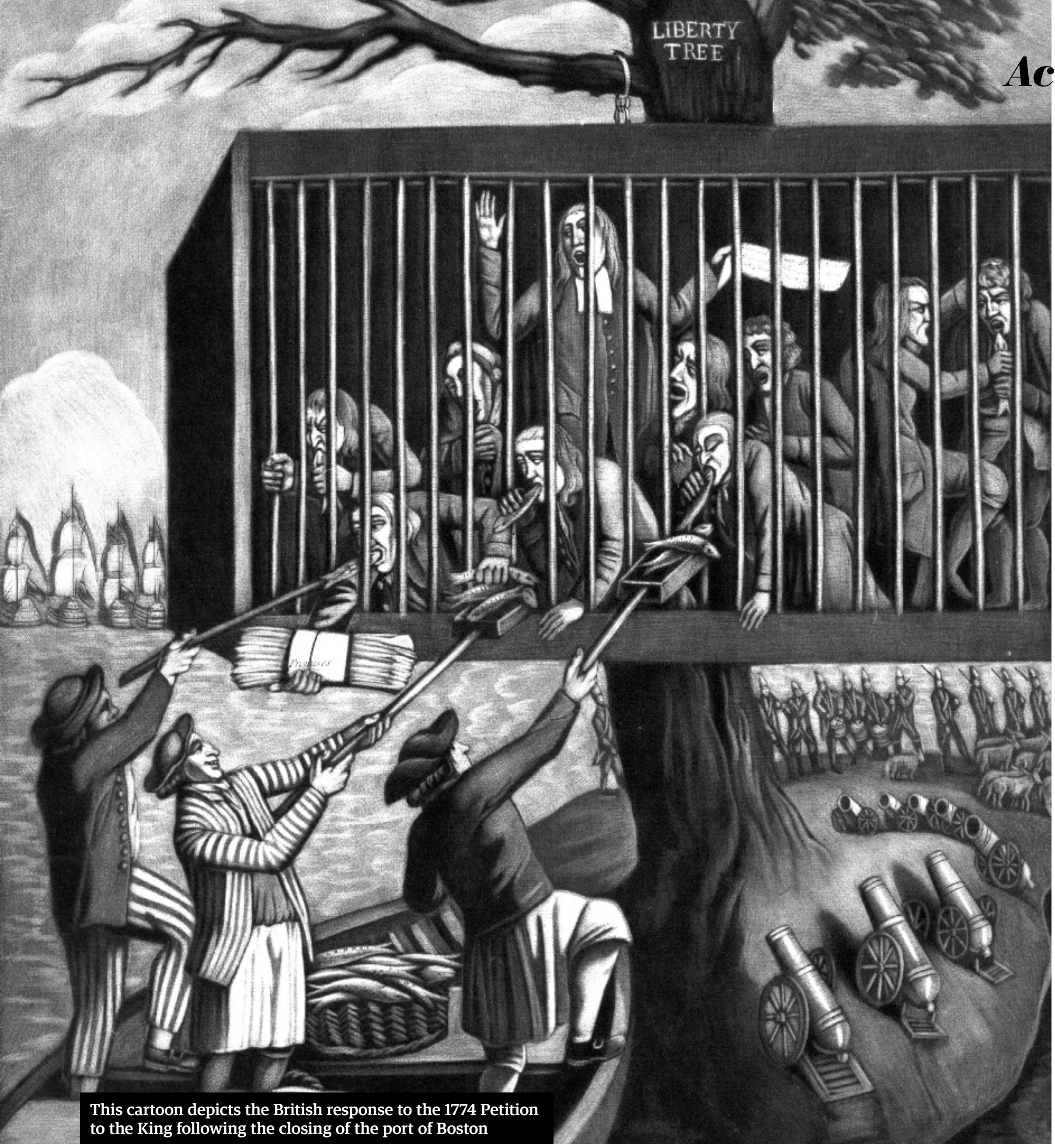
Ratcheting up the tensions, parliament responded by dissolving the Massachusetts and New York assemblies and the Virginia House of Burgesses. Royal governors, the vicars of King George III in the colonies, were vested with unprecedented authority to quell unrest.

Meanwhile, revolutionary firebrands and propagandists such as Samuel Adams of Massachusetts and Patrick Henry of Virginia whipped revolutionary fervour to a fevered crescendo. Adams harangued a large crowd in the great port city of Boston, declaring "In all free states, the constitution is fixed; it is from thence, that the legislature derives its authority; therefore it cannot change the constitution without destroying its own foundation."

More British troops were dispatched to the colonies to enforce the collection of the Townshend duties. The mere presence of these redcoats on the streets of colonial cities was an affront to many colonists, and nowhere was the enmity as great as in Boston. Incidents of civil unrest became common as enraged crowds gathered to jeer and taunt British soldiers, sometimes pelting them with rocks or snowballs. On 5 March 1770, one such encounter resulted in the tragic Boston Massacre as several protesters were killed or wounded. Parliament recoiled from the violence and repealed all of the taxes levied under the Townshend Acts, with the exception of the tax on tea.

Nevertheless, violence escalated. Angry colonists burned a British customs schooner to the waterline in Rhode Island, while tax collectors were driven from their homes, tarred and feathered, or forced to drink a "brimming bumper of punch" – a steaming hot quaff of the terrible tea.

In 1773, parliament approved the Tea Act in order to bolster the fortunes of the faltering East India Company. The act allowed the company to land tea in the colonies without first arriving in England where a tax would otherwise be paid; therefore,



This cartoon depicts the British response to the 1774 Petition to the King following the closing of the port of Boston

the price of East India Company tea was actually cheaper in America. The unintended consequences, however, included the rage of colonial merchants who were priced out of the market, along with the fear that acquiescing to the Tea Act would somehow validate parliament's right to tax the colonies directly.

On 16 December 1773, members of the Sons of Liberty - a clandestine and militant Patriot organisation - dressed as Native Americans and climbed aboard three ships in Boston Harbor. In the ensuing melee, they overcame the crews and emptied the ships' holds of their cargoes - 342 crates of tea - into the water below. No tax would be paid on the waterlogged leaves, worth nearly $1 million today. The event came to be known as the Boston Tea Party, and the British response was swift and harsh.

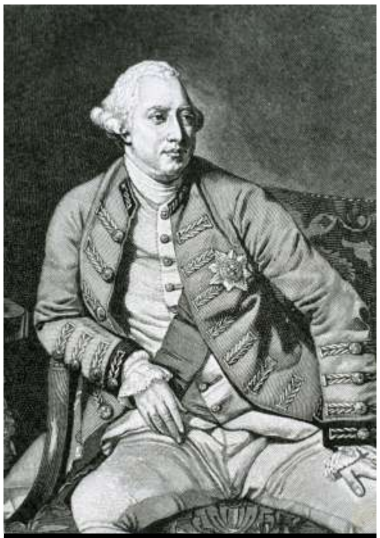
Coercion and conflict

In 1774, parliament passed the Coercive Acts, sending a clear message to the people of Boston and the colony of Massachusetts. Known as the Intolerable Acts in the colonies, the edicts dissolved the Massachusetts Charter, closed the port of Boston to trade, enacted martial law, and brought an army of occupation into the city. British prime minister Lord North rose in parliament and proclaimed that the "...New England governments are in a state of rebellion!"

The Coercive Acts coalesced colonial opposition to parliament and the Crown like never before. Aid poured into Boston from across the colonies. Leaders in Massachusetts organised a shadow government and issued a call for colonial leaders to address their grievances against the Crown with one voice. Some colonial governments called for the formation of local militia and the gathering of stores of weapons and ammunition in the event of open hostilities.

The First Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia on 5 September 1774, and approved the Suffolk Resolves, enumerating the reasons for the present distress one by one, and further appealing directly to the King for redress. No response from the monarch was forthcoming. The Congress adjourned on 26 October, with a commitment to reconvene in May 1775 to assess progress toward reconciliation.

However, by then the first shots of the American Revolution had been fired at the Battles of Lexington and Concord.



King George III empowered the government of Quebec to control extensive North American territory

The Quebec Act of 1774

This unpopular law had effects across both Quebec and the Thirteen Colonies

On 22 June 1774, King George III gave royal assent to the Quebec Act, which handed the government of the Canadian province of Quebec jurisdiction over vast territory in what is now the United States, including portions of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Other provisions in the act related to the protection of the Roman Catholic faith and the functions of old French and British law in the conduct of affairs.

The act was troubling to Britain's North American colonists, some of whom considered it one more component of the hated Coercive Acts, imposed just weeks earlier in retaliation against the city of Boston and the colony of Massachusetts for the Boston Tea Party, and in fact the measure hastened the coming of the American Revolution. Land speculators, who had hoped to find fortune in the purchase and resale of tracts west of the Appalachians were angered, while settlers were already crossing the peaks to establish homesteads. Further, those of Protestant persuasion were offended that the Crown would support the spread of Papism.

Generally, the Quebec Act added to the angst among the colonists, who saw the measure as further evidence of the government in far-off London interfering with the rights of the colonists and their progress towards prosperity. The First Continental Congress also issued a proclamation to the people of Quebec, warning the Canadians that parliament was becoming increasingly arbitrary and confrontational in its dealings with British subjects in North America.

The Boston Massacre

Violence on 5 March 770 stoked the fires of American independence

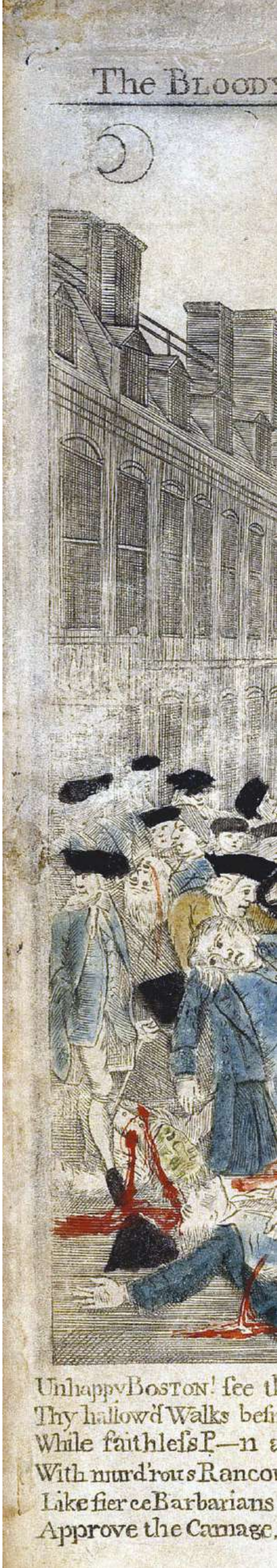
In the spring of 1770, tensions were running high in Boston, Massachusetts. An important port, it was an obvious flashpoint for arguments about the Townshend Acts, which imposed import tariffs on goods manufactured in Britain and exported to the colonies. Disgruntled colonists argued that the Acts violated the natural, charter and constitutional rights of Britain's American subjects. Campaigns were organised. Petitions were signed. Letters were written. Boycotts were threatened. The deadlocked argument was moving inexorably towards a violent confrontation.

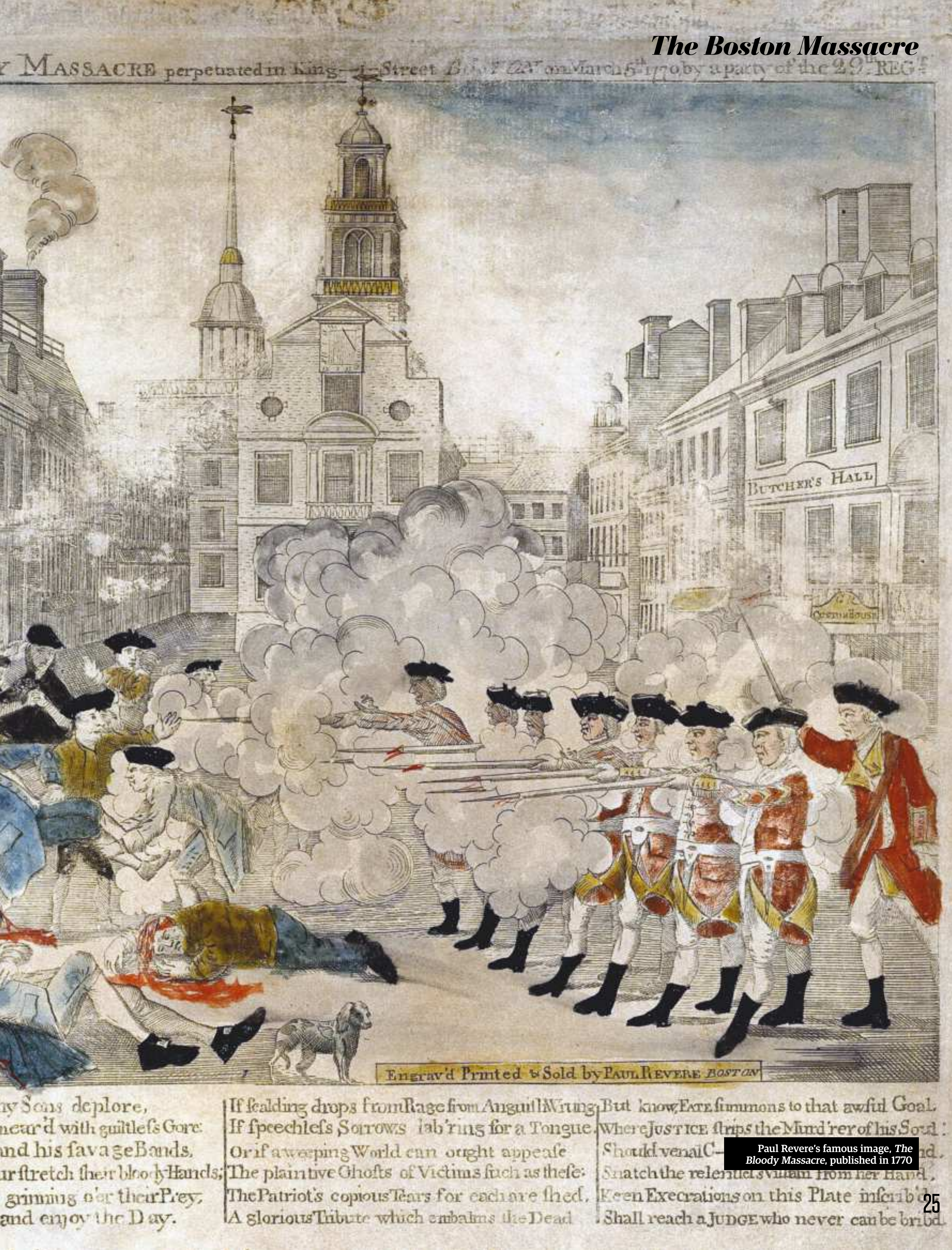
In recent years, ad-hoc associations of protestors incensed by British taxation had begun to spring up all over New England. Calling themselves Sons of Liberty - a phrase coined by the Irish colonel Isaac Barré in a speech to parliament against the Stamp Tax - they employed tactics ranging from whisper campaigns to direct action to mobilise the colonists against their perceived British oppressors. Britain began to divert extra troops from Canada to Boston in 1768, under the excuse of shoring up the city's defences against encroachments from the French. But the true purpose of the influx of red-coated soldiers seemed clear to the fractious Bostonians. To their eyes, the show of imperial force, with almost as many troops in the streets as residents in the city, was one more grievance against the British Crown.

Troops and citizens coexisted in Boston uneasily for two years, with the soldiers provoking particular Bostonian ire by moonlighting in other jobs for lower wages than the normal workforce, rendering many struggling locals unemployed. Night fights between unruly Bostonian and British mobs were a regular occurrence. The killing of an 11-year-old Bostonian boy, Christopher Seider, on 22 February 1770, was a gift to anti-British propagandists who made much of it in the *Boston Gazette* and elsewhere. The turnout for Seider's funeral was one of the largest the city had ever seen. The nightly violence worsened.

Just a couple of weeks later, on 5 March, a wigmaker's apprentice called Edward Garrick approached British officer Captain-Lieutenant John Goldfinch, outside the King Street Customs House. Garrick accused Goldfinch of not having paid a bill that was owed to his employer. Goldfinch, who in fact had paid, ignored him. Garrick persisted. The pair exchanged words, which became increasingly heated. A British private on guard duty nearby (Hugh White) intervened, warning Garrick to mind his tone. Garrick answered back, and White knocked him on the head with his musket. A friend of Garrick's, Bartholomew Broaders, involved himself in the altercation, and his boisterous argument with White began to attract a crowd.

Some of the crowd called out to raise an alarm, causing the church bells to be rung, which brought even more people onto the streets. Before long White was facing at least 50 angry Bostonians, with an escaped slave named Crispus Attucks at their




y MASSACRE perpetrated in King Street Boston on March 5th 1770 by a party of the 29th REGᵀ
BUTCHER'S HALL
Custom House
Engrav'd Printed & Sold by PAUL REVERE BOSTON
y Sons deplore,
mear'd with guiltleſs Gore:
and his ſavage Bands,
ur ſtretch their bloody Hands;
grinning o'er their Prey,
and enjoy the Day.
If ſcalding drops from Rage from Anguiſh Wrung
If ſpeechleſs Sorrows lab'ring for a Tongue,
Or if a weeping World can ought appeaſe
The plaintive Ghoſts of Victims ſuch as theſe:
The Patriot's copious Tears for each are ſhed,
A glorious Tribute which embalms the Dead
But know, FATE ſummons to that awful Goal,
Where JUSTICE ſtrips the Murd'rer of his Soul:
Should venal C—
Snatch the relentleſs Villain from her Hand,
Keen Execrations on this Plate inſcrib'd,
Shall reach a JUDGE who never can be brib'd.

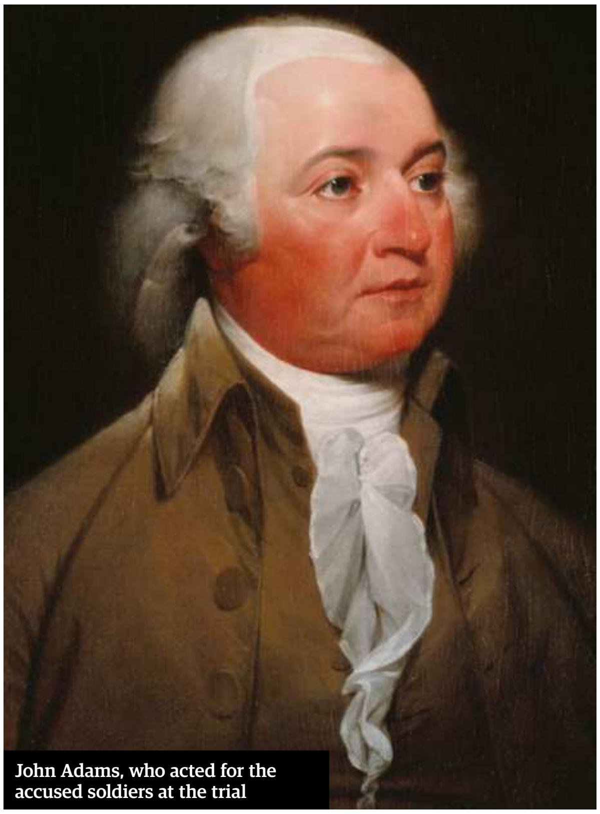
Paul Revere's famous image, *The Bloody Massacre*, published in 1770 head. Objects were thrown, White was dared to fire his musket, and White's cries for assistance sent runners to the nearby barracks in search of backup.

Officer of the Watch Captain Thomas Preston sent a contingent of six soldiers armed with fixed bayonets to extricate White from the volatile situation, but their arrival on the scene made things worse, provoking a barrage of thrown snowballs and detritus as they circled to protect White with their guns aimed at the crowd, which by now numbered in the hundreds. Within minutes, Private Hugh Montgomery had been knocked to the ground by a large chunk of ice thrown from the crowd. Almost inevitably, though no order had been given, Montgomery then, on regaining his feet, fired his musket into the mob. Richard Palmes, a Boston publican, responded by attacking the soldiers with a cudgel, prompting more gunfire. Attucks was killed instantly (going down in history in some quarters as "the first man to die for a free America"), along with a ropemaker named Samuel Gray and a seaman called James Caldwell. Eight other people were injured, of which a further two died of their wounds shortly afterwards. The mob moved into the nearby streets to escape the muskets, but continued to congregate in increasing numbers. They were only eventually dispersed by the arrival of Acting Governor Thomas Hutchinson who, from the balcony of the state house, promised an inquiry into the night's tragic events. By morning, the eight soldiers involved, plus Captain Thomas Preston, had been arrested

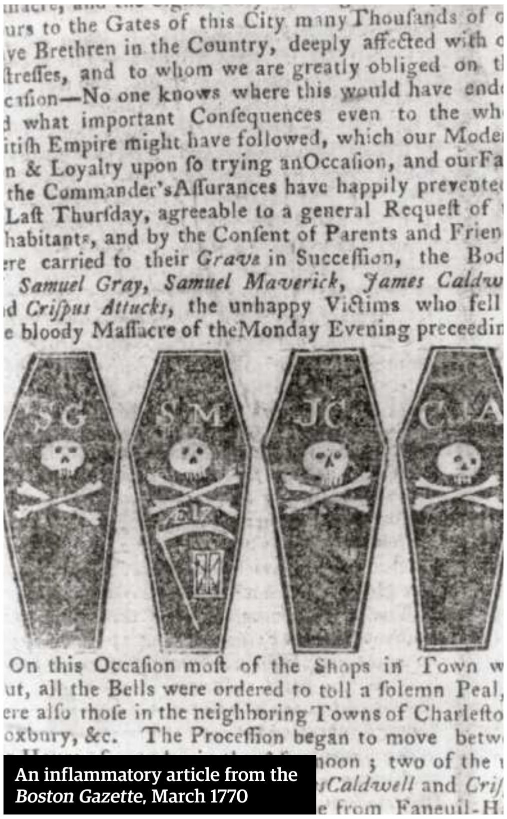
As with the death of Christopher Seider, the events of the evening of 5 March immediately fed the propaganda machine. The *Boston Gazette* ran a prominent illustration of the coffins of the dead, claiming the massacre as part of an insidious and continuing "scheme to quell the spirit of liberty". Local engraver Paul Revere produced an incendiary picture he called *The Bloody Massacre* depicting the shootings as an orchestrated British attack. And provocative pamphlets with titles like "Innocent Blood Crying To God From The Streets Of Boston" and "A Short Narrative Of The Horrid Massacre" were circulated far and wide.

The British troops were, with some reluctance, withdrawn from the city for fear of more widespread violent uprising. And within three weeks, the eight soldiers and Preston had been formally accused of murder (along with four civilians from the crowd who had also been seen firing shots). Depositions collected by Hutchinson from the accused and others involved were published as the pamphlet "A Fair Account Of The Late Unhappy Disturbance In Boston". Preston opined within that, "So bitter and inveterate are many of the malcontents here that they are industriously using every method to fish out evidence that [the massacre] was a concerted scheme to murder the inhabitants. Others are infusing the utmost malice and revenge into the minds of the people who are to be my jurors through false publications..."

With the troops gone, Boston was calmer by the time of the actual trial in November (Preston had already been acquitted by this point, having convinced a jury that he did not order his troops to fire). Stepping forward to defend the accused soldiers were lawyers John Adams (brother of Samuel) and Josiah Quincy II, at Preston's personal



John Adams, who acted for the accused soldiers at the trial



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An inflammatory article from the *Boston Gazette*, March 1770

The Boston Massacre Memorial on Boston Common

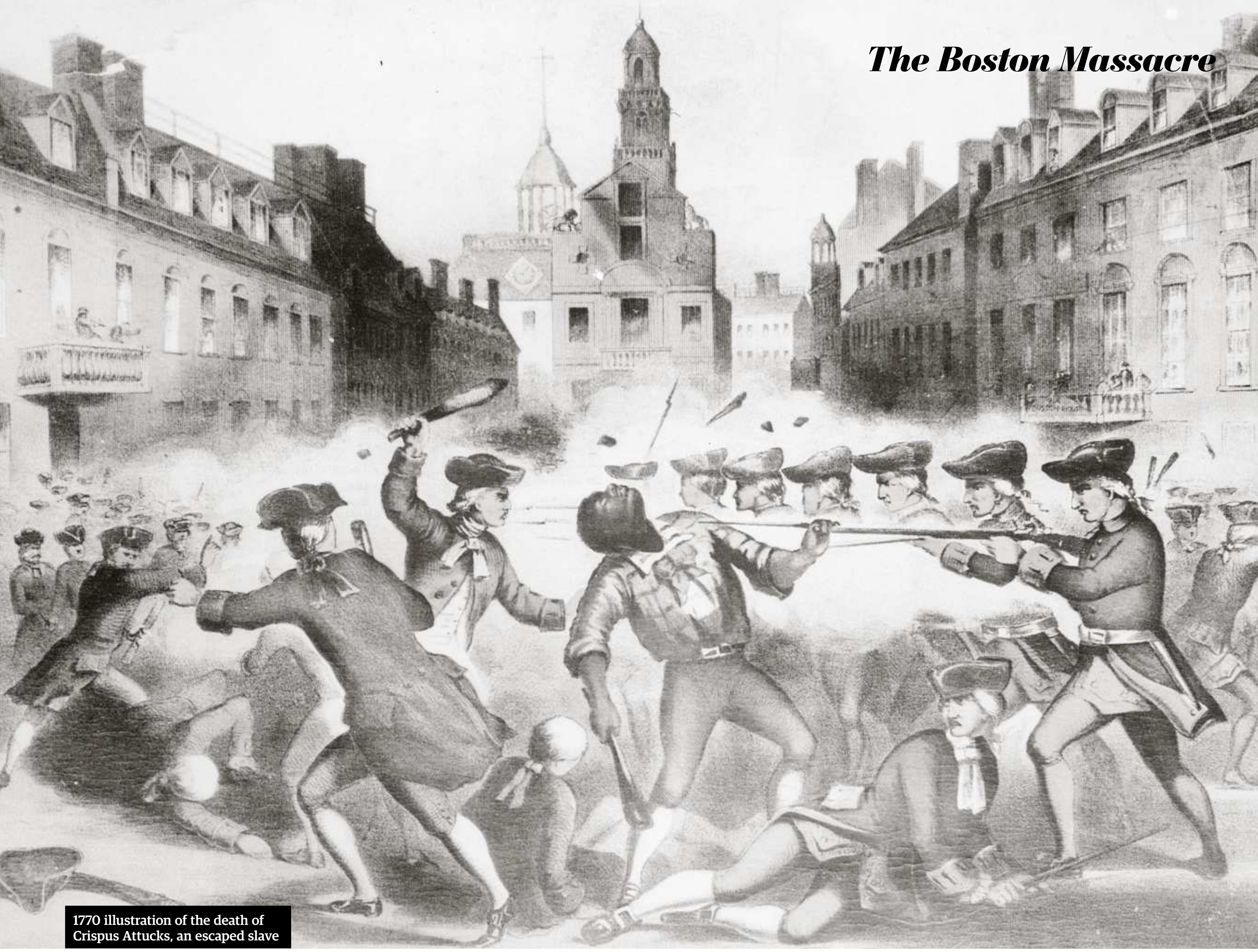
The Massacre Remembered

How the massacre was memorialised

The events of 5 March 1770, were not soon forgotten, and for the next 13 years, the anniversary was officially marked by the Massacre Day holiday. Featured speakers delivered an oration every year, which was then published in pamphlet form. James Lovell made the inaugural speech in 1771, followed in the subsequent years by Joseph Warren, Benjamin Church and John Hancock. The formula was the riling up of anti-British sentiment, reminding Bostonians that their fellow citizens had been killed on their own soil by British soldiers, and framing the result of those soldiers' trial as an injustice.

The final Massacre Day was observed in 1783, with the Reverend Doctor Thomas Welch espousing the danger of garrisoning soldiers in cities. After this, following the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, the holiday was replaced by the rather more celebratory Independence Day, marking the signing of the Declaration of Independence every 4 July.

Official commemorations of the massacre continued, however. An event organised in 1858 focused on Crispus Attucks as part of a celebration of the role of African Americans in the Revolutionary War. And in 1888, a monument was unveiled on Boston Common depicting the massacre's victims, who were reinterred in the Granary Burying Ground alongside other prominent Revolutionary-era patriots. The cemetery and the site of the massacre are, to this day, part of Boston's Freedom Trail commemorating the city's revolutionary history. The massacre is re-enacted every 5 March in a display organised by the Bostonian Society.



1770 illustration of the death of Crispus Attucks, an escaped slave

“Adams argued the case for self-defence, instructing the jury to ignore the fact that the soldiers were British ”

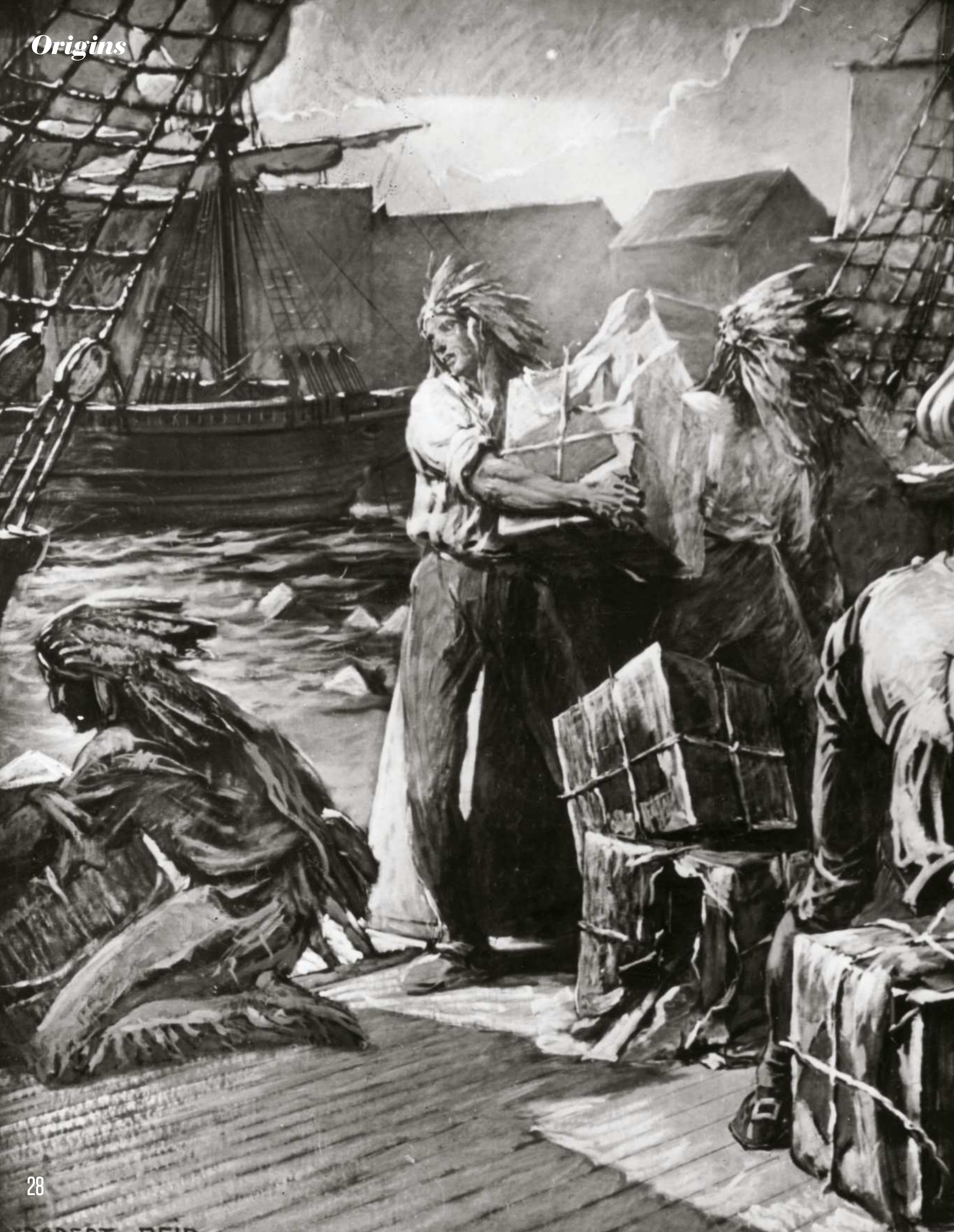
request. Both were already renowned as patriotic Americans opposed to the British tax laws, but both were convinced of the need for a fair trial to be seen to happen – by both sides of the Atlantic. With the proper letter of the law observed, there could be no retaliation from the British, and no alienating of the American moderates who might support American freedom in principle but balk at its being paid for with blood. Massachusetts Solicitor General Samuel Quincy handled the case for the prosecution, representing the City of Boston along with private attorney Robert Treat Paine.

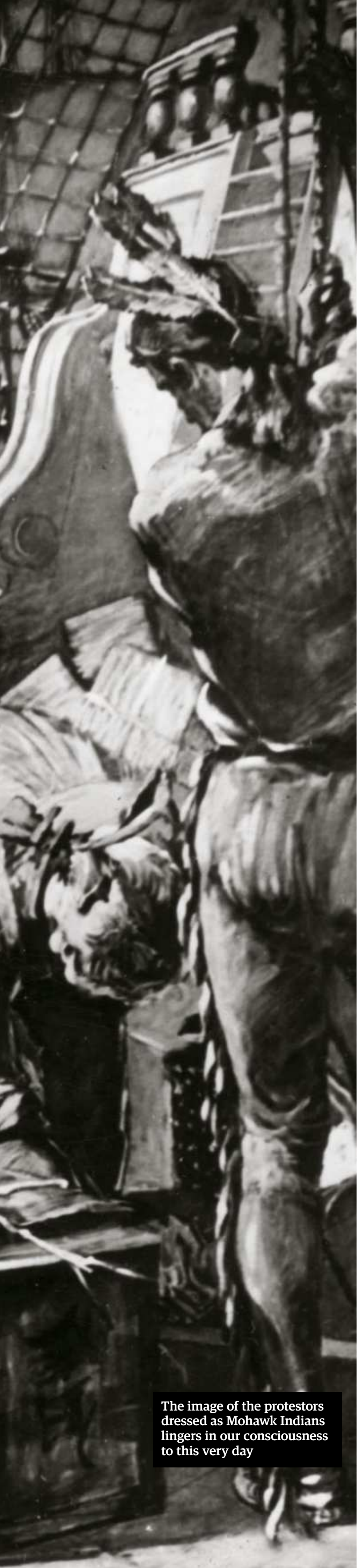
The prior acquittal of Preston had complicated the defence's job in that, if Preston hadn't given the order to fire, the soldiers had certainly taken that decision themselves. But at the trial, Adams argued the case for self-defence, instructing the jury to ignore the fact that the soldiers were British. The soldiers had been surrounded by a “motley rabble”, he insisted, comprised of “saucy boys, Negroes and mulattos, Irish Teagues and outlandish Jack Tars,” the likes of which any reasonable person might have been panicked by. If they had been in fear for their lives then they were entitled to fight back. One important piece of evidence in the defence's favour turned out to be the deathbed testimony of Patrick Carr, one of the victims who had died of his injuries after the event. He said that he did not blame the soldier who had shot him, as he had indeed been provoked into action through fear for his own safety.

The prosecution tried to argue that the soldiers were acting in revenge for months of harassment and abuse from the townspeople, but the jury found their argument weak, and the result of the trial was essentially the acquittal of all the accused. Two were actually found guilty of manslaughter for having fired on the crowd indiscriminately. The lesser charge still carried a capital sentence at that time, but both men invoked “the benefit of the clergy”, allowing them to avoid execution or a prison sentence in exchange for having their thumbs branded with the letter M. This was a permanent reminder that they would not receive such lenient treatment a second time. The four civilians also on trial were all acquitted after a witness was proved to have lied under oath.

Adams, who went on in subsequent years to become the second president of the independent United States, wrote later that 5 March 1770 was the date “the foundation of American independence was laid,” fomenting as it did the anti-parliament and anti-monarchy sentiments that would underpin the Revolutionary War. Defending the soldiers was, he said, “one of the best pieces of service I ever rendered my country. Judgement of death upon those soldiers would have been as foul a stain upon this country as the executions of Quakers or witches anciently.”

In the trial's wake, the British parliament eased some of the political tension by repealing most of the Townshend Acts, with the exception of the one involving the taxation of tea. That would cause its own problems in the near future…





The image of the protestors dressed as Mohawk Indians lingers in our consciousness to this very day

© Gettyimages

The Boston Tea Party

How the storming of three British trade ships changed the course of history

It was on 16 December 1773 when a crowded meeting in one of Boston's largest public buildings erupted in patriotic fervour and sparked an event that would, eventually, ignite the American War of Independence. According to tradition, the meeting was interrupted by a cry from a leather-worker called Adam Collson, who is said to have declared, "Boston Harbor a teapot this night!" A roar of ascent went up from those gathered about him and around 100 men, a group "with strong backs and hard Yankee accents," according to one leading historian, dressed themselves as Native Americans and stormed three trading ships that were moored at Griffin's Wharf - the *Eleanor*, the *Beaver* and the *Dartmouth*.

With the owners refusing to sail their ships out of the harbour, the Bostonians seized the ships' cargo - 340 chests of tea - hauling them up onto the decks and splitting them open. A rich aroma filled the air (and some men, it is said, filled their pockets with the pungent leaves). Over the course of the next three hours, the men spilled out more than 40 tonnes of tea, which they then dumped into the water. This act of vandalism, which became known many years later as the Boston Tea Party, was inspired by indignation and a perceived affront to liberty; it was a statement of political disquiet rather than open revolt. Its consequences, however, would reverberate around the world.

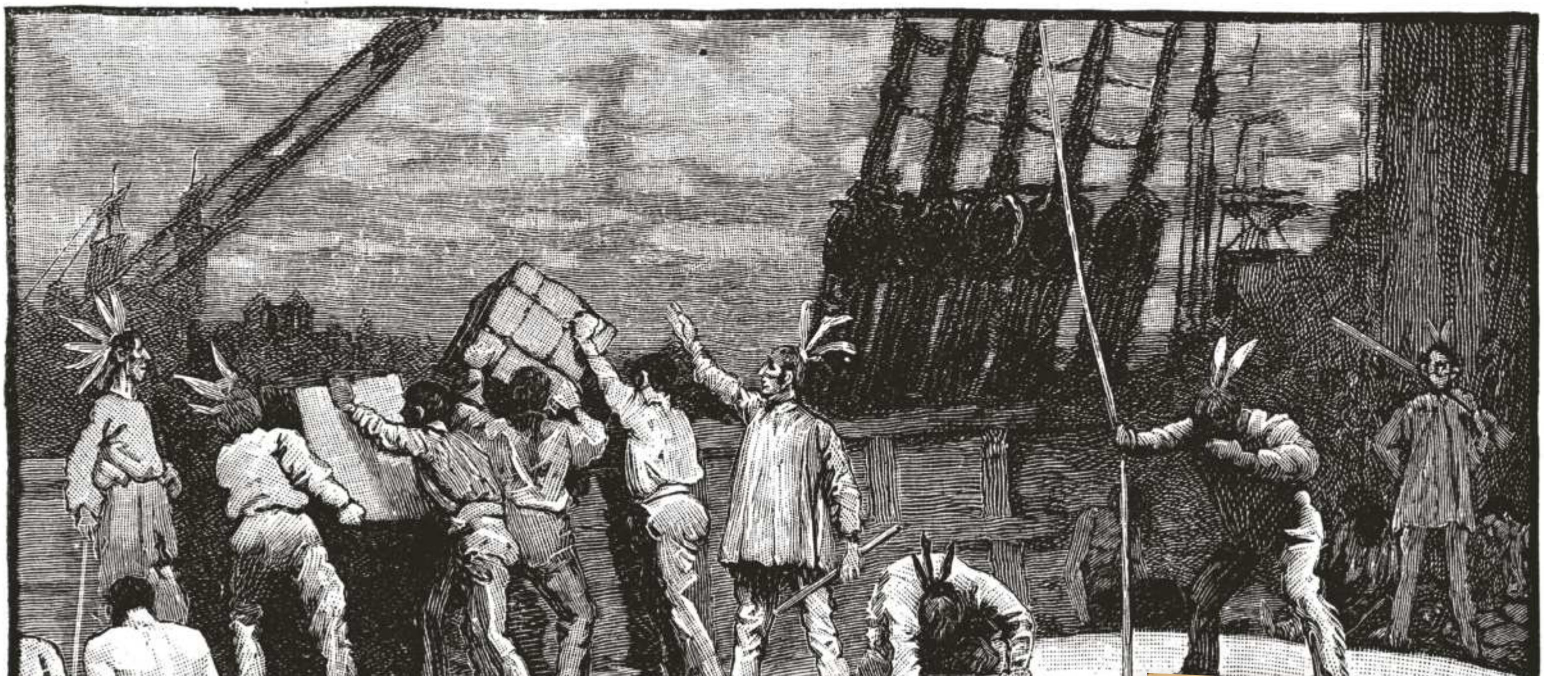
For this was an act of international significance. The ships belonged to the British East India Company (EIC), a trading behemoth, emblematic of the empire it served, with tendrils tucked into countries all over the globe. And it was the British government's favouring of this powerhouse that provoked the events on Griffin's Wharf.

Admittedly, Boston in the late 18th century was a turbulent town, with a population that was not afraid to demonstrate its dissatisfaction through acts of public unrest. British soldiers had shot dead five Americans during the infamous Incident on King Street in 1770, when an angry mob gathered to protest against unpopular taxes. Even so, the destruction of EIC property in Boston Harbor was an extreme move.

Protests against tea-drinking became so violent that one merchant burned his own cargo ship

The dissent was brewed in a pot of Britain's making, bubbling over in the wake of the British government's bid to boost the position of the EIC at the expense of the colonies. In 1773, the EIC was in financial turmoil, prompting parliament to grant the company a whopping £1.4 million loan. Then, in May of the same year, parliament passed the Tea Act, adjusting import duties in the colonies to give the EIC an absolute monopoly and thereby creating an avenue down which it could sell its surplus stocks of tea. Under the new sales levies, not even colonial smugglers could compete with the EIC.

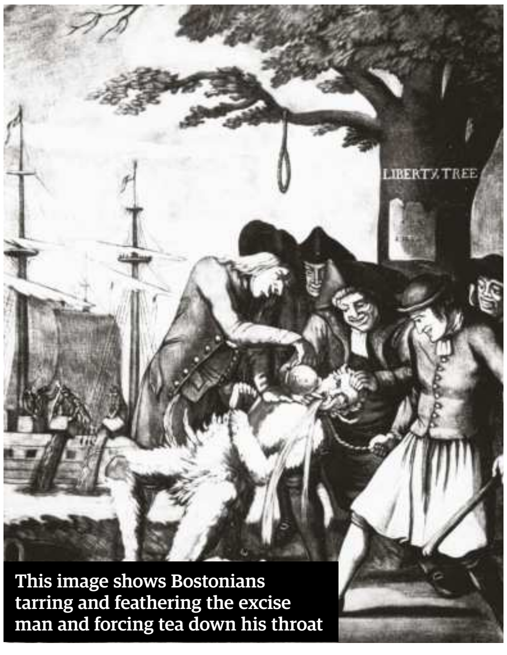
During September 1773, the EIC shipped over 200 tonnes of tea across the Atlantic, though under pressure from patriotic groups, the consignees in Charleston, New York and Philadelphia refused to accept the shipments. After all, the Tea Act set a



It took the men three hours to pour all the ships' cargo into the saltwater

dangerous precedent – if the British government could profit at America's expense by granting a monopoly on the sale of tea, might it not start creating new monopolies? With high prices and unfeasible taxes, the colonists would suffer.

The issue of liberty versus tyranny also loomed large. The imposition of these taxes by the British government with no discussion at a local level was, for many, a sign of the Empire's autocracy.


LIBERTY TREE

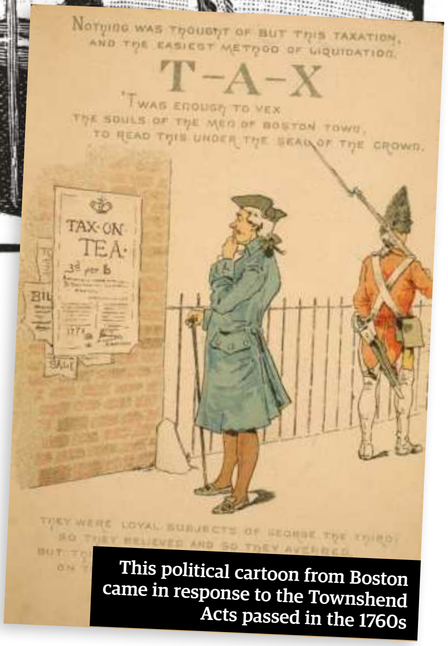
This image shows Bostonians tarring and feathering the excise man and forcing tea down his throat

Despite these arguments, and ignoring pressure from colonial lobbyists, the consignees in Boston still refused to concede and the *Eleanor*, *Beaver* and *Dartmouth* sailed their cargo into the harbour. In Boston, tension mounted. The tireless Samuel Adams, second cousin to future president John Adams, was a vocal presence, a leader among Boston's 'Sons of Liberty', and he lobbied the consignees and the governor. Still, they held firm. They would unload and sell their tea.

The night of 16 December arrived and this was a moment of significance, for on the following day, the ships' cargo was due to pass into the hands of the custom officers and the duty would be paid. Discussion and deliberation raged in Boston's Old South Meeting House – Samuel Adams chairing the debate – and it was decided that if the consignees refused to relent, then the tea would be drowned. The Bostonians were adamant: they would not pay the duty. When the decision was made and midnight loomed large, there were war whoops and shouting, an infernal noise according to one observer, and a group of men dressed as Mohawk Indians marched down to the harbour to carry out their act of destruction.

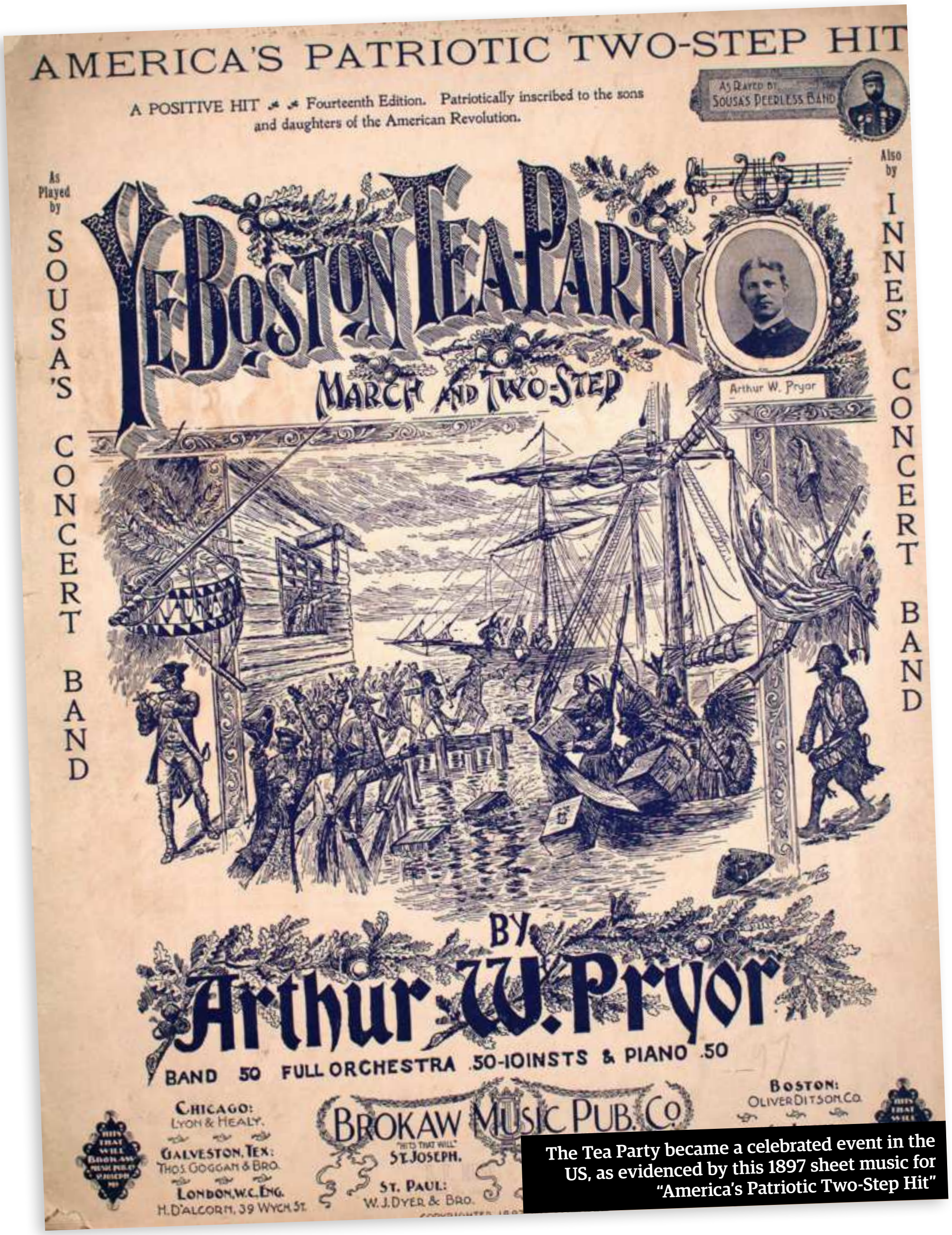
It appears that Adams did not actively participate in the dumping of the tea, but many historians believe him to be one of the architects. Whether he went to the wharf to witness the destruction remains unknown, but he worked diligently to publicise and defend the action, citing it as the only option that Bostonians had in the defence of their constitutional rights. The Tea Party was not all-out rebellion, but it set in motion the events that would lead to the American War of Independence. It was, said John Adams, "the most magnificent movement of all."

Across the Atlantic, the British government disagreed. It was outraged. Britain had, many believed, been more than fair when reacting to acts of American resistance, tempering their responses


Nothing was thought of but this taxation,
and the easiest method of liquidation.
T-A-X
'Twas enough to vex
the souls of the men of Boston town,
to read this under the seal of the crown.
TAX·ON TEA·
3d per lb
1774
BIL
SALE
They were loyal subjects of George the Third;
so they believed and so they averred,

This political cartoon from Boston came in response to the Townshend Acts passed in the 1760s

> "As the battle for liberty raged, many in Boston began to argue for abolition"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The Tea Party became a celebrated event in the US, as evidenced by this 1897 sheet music for "America's Patriotic Two-Step Hit"

and repealing unpopular edicts, including many of the indirect taxes levied under the hated Townshend Acts. In the wake of the Tea Party assault, however, Lord Chief Justice Mansfield said that they would "temporise no longer" and parliament passed what became known as the Coercive Acts. First came the Boston Port Act of March 1774, which closed the port and demanded that the townsfolk pay for the tea that was dumped into the water. Two months later the Massachusetts Government Act received royal assent, effectively abrogating the Massachusetts Bay Colony's rights of self-government.

In the same month, the Administration of Justice Act became law - a temporary measure that granted soldiers and customs officials the power to exercise their duties without fear of conviction by colonial juries. It became known locally as the Murder Act, as Bostonians thought soldiers and officials would be able to get away with murder. The Quartering Bill, meanwhile, gave the governor power to billet soldiers in the town itself. The Coercive Acts were designed to isolate Boston from the rest of the colonies, but they had the opposite effect, provoking outrage across Massachusetts, and the colonies - their ardour whipped up by the likes of Adams - threw their support behind Boston. As the battle for liberty raged, many in Boston began to argue for abolition. The times were changing.

The tea dumped into Boston harbour would have been worth an estimated $1 million today

Many point to the Tea Party as the seed moment of America's tradition of civil disobedience, a seminal manifestation of liberty and independence. "By reading the tea leaves at the bottom of Boston Harbor," writes one eminent scholar, "we can see the American character itself taking shape." On the flip side, it was also an act of terrorism. Nobody died during the Tea Party, but did it set a dangerous precedent? Was the rule of law to mean nothing if certain segments of the population disagreed with its tenets? The Tea Party represents a conundrum, a point to be debated. But no one could argue against its significance.

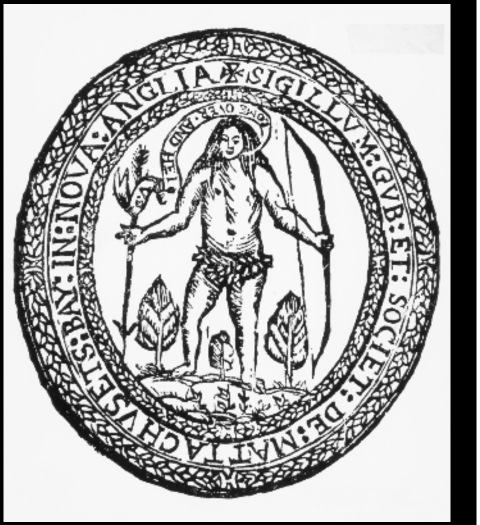
Why did they dress as natives?

Every image of the Boston Tea Party tells the same story - the tea throwers dressed as Native Americans, in the most part as Mohawks. The outfits point to the fact that the Tea Party was well planned, with those closest to its inception clad most convincingly. There were 18 'chiefs' who were expertly dressed. The men under their command disguised themselves as well as they could, some wrapping blankets around their shoulders, others just dusting their faces with soot. The disguises were myriad - and so too the reasons for their employment.

The most obvious reason was disguise, though in a town of 16,000 people, many of whom were staunch Patriots, the vast majority of the Tea Party members were well known among the townsfolk. When the soldiers came calling, however, the same townsfolk could profess ignorance, especially when ethnic minorities were such common scapegoats. That said, not even the most gullible Briton in the colonies believed that a posse of Mohawks had travelled through perilous territory to hurl tea into Boston Harbor.

Some historians believe that the adoption of Mohawk attire was a form of pageantry, and certainly the mob would have looked especially menacing. The logbook of the *Dartmouth* recorded that the assailants were "dressed and whooping like Indians", a frightening sight for the sailors.

Perhaps the most pertinent reason for the disguises was the political statement they made. The seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony featured an image of a Native American, and by dressing as such, the Tea Party participants were celebrating their uniquely American identity.


SIGILLVM GVB: ET: SOCIETATIS: DE: MATTACHVSETS: BAY: IN: NOVA: ANGLIA
COME OVER AND HELP US

The seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony

The First Continental Congress

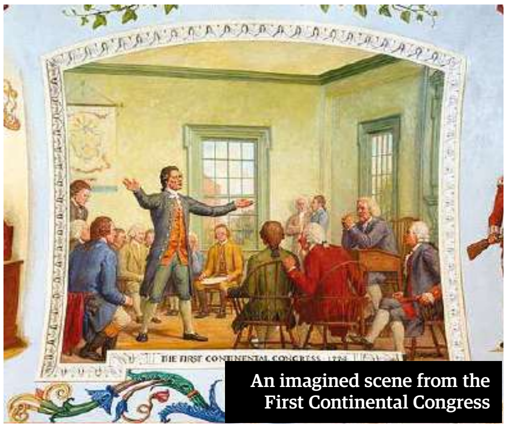
Responding to the Coercive Acts enacted by parliament to punish Massachusetts, the First Continental Congress appealed for redress to King George III in London

When the militant Sons of Liberty, dressed as Native Americans, tossed British tea into Boston Harbor on 16 December 1773, the incident reverberated across the Atlantic to the halls of parliament. It enacted a series of punitive measures called the Coercive Acts to bring the upstart colonies, particularly Massachusetts, back into line. Nearly a decade of British taxation, intended to defray expenses related to the maintenance of a standing army in America and recover costs associated with the prosecution of the French and Indian War, elicited an increasingly united opposition from the restive colonies.

Fifty-six representatives from 12 of the 13 colonies convened at Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia on 5 September 1774, to present a response to the acts that had closed the port of Boston, enacted martial law in Massachusetts, required colonists to house British soldiers in their private homes and given immunity to representatives of the British Crown who had been charged with crimes in the colonies. Prior to the First Continental Congress, as the meeting was called, colonial responses to parliamentary measures had been coordinated primarily through committees of correspondence.

In the midst of a Native American uprising, Georgia depended on British support and did not send delegates to Congress

Delegates to the First Continental Congress included many of the Founding Fathers of the United States, including George Washington of Virginia, John Adams and Samuel Adams of Massachusetts, and John Jay of New York. Virginian Peyton Randolph was named its president. Perspectives on the purpose and goals of the gathering varied greatly, from simply formulating a rational response to the Coercive Acts and fostering reconciliation with the London government, to curbing the outright authority of parliament in the colonies and even the development of a new colonial government that was separate and independent from Great Britain.



An imagined scene from the First Continental Congress

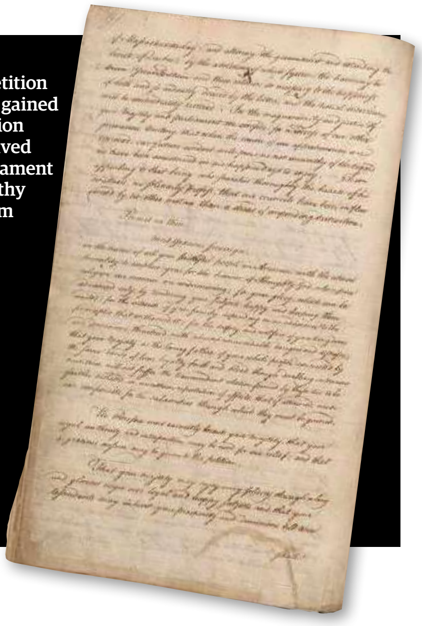
For 51 days, the delegates debated an appropriate response to the Coercive Acts. Fiery Virginian Patrick Henry rose and argued that the time had come to assert independence, since colonial government had already been usurped.

The long journey of the Petition

On 2 November 1774, the cargo ship *Britannia* set sail from the port of Philadelphia. Aboard was the petition drafted during the First Continental Congress for presentation to King George III, with the hope that the Coercive Acts would be repealed and good relations between the Crown and the colonies restored. Soon afterwards, *Britannia* encountered an Atlantic storm and was forced to return to port with the document, now waterlogged and illegible, still aboard. A replacement copy departed Philadelphia on the ship *Mary and Elizabeth* on 6 November, arriving safely in London eight days later.

British prime minister Lord North presented the petition to parliament on 19 January 1775, but Benjamin Franklin observed three weeks later that it was among "...a great Heap of letters of Intelligence from Governors and officers in America, Newspapers, Pamphlets, Handbills, etc., from that Country, the last in the List, and was laid upon the Table with them, undistinguished by any particular Recommendation of it to the Notice of either House; and I do not find, that it has had any further notice taken of it as yet, than that it has been read as well as the other Papers".

King George did not respond.


The 1774 Petition to the King gained little attention when it arrived before parliament after a lengthy journey from America

"Government is dissolved," he asserted. "Fleets and armies and the present state of things show that government is dissolved. Where are your landmarks, your boundaries of colonies? We are in a state of nature, sir!"

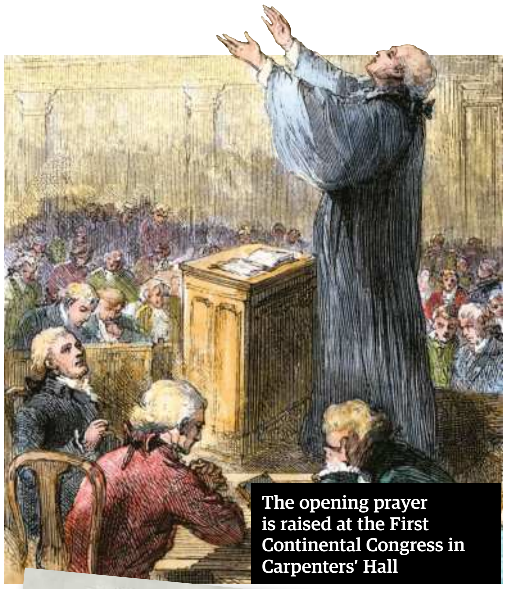
The majority of the delegates were not yet ready to claim separation from the Crown, but on 17 September, they deemed the Coercive Acts as oppressive and that they were "not to be obeyed". The Congress also moved for the formation of colonial militia, and a series of resolutions prompted the most concerted actions among colonial leaders yet to emerge in the deepening crisis with Great Britain.

The First Continental Congress produced the Articles of Association, an agreement to boycott the purchase of goods imported from Britain, effective 1 December 1774. The formation of committees of inspection and observation would ensure compliance with the legislated boycott. Further, the Coercive Acts – known in the colonies as the 'Intolerable Acts' – should be repealed by 10 September 1775, or the colonies would cease the export of goods to Britain. A Declaration of Rights was also approved, confirming the loyalty of the colonists as British subjects but disputing the right of parliament to levy taxes in America.

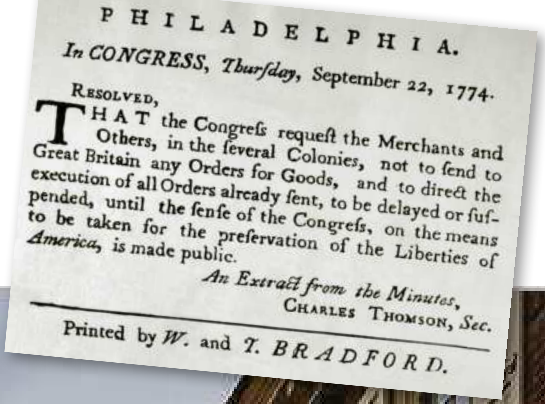
On 1 October 1774, the delegates approved a resolution to petition King George III, stating unanimously "that loyal address to his Majesty be prepared, dutifully requesting the royal attention to the grievances that alarm his Majesty's faithful subjects in North America, and entreating his Majesty's gracious interposition for the removal of such grievances, thereby to restore between Great Britain and the colonies the harmony so necessary to the happiness of the British empire, and so ardently desired by all America".

The resolution was drafted and approved in late October, stressing that with the repeal of the Coercive Acts, relations between Britain and the colonies would be greatly improved. In early 1775, the petition came before parliament, but received little attention.

The delegates agreed to meet a second time the following May and adjourned on 26 October 1774. Meanwhile, the boycott was enacted and imports from Great Britain to the colonies dropped precipitously in the months that followed. With the exception of New York, the colonial assemblies approved the actions of the First Continental Congress. The deadline for the cessation of exports to Great Britain was never reached. War had erupted several months earlier.



The opening prayer is raised at the First Continental Congress in Carpenters' Hall



PHILADELPHIA.

In CONGRESS, Thurſday, September 22, 1774.

Resolved,

THAT the Congreſs requeſt the Merchants and Others, in the ſeveral Colonies, not to ſend to Great Britain any Orders for Goods, and to direct the execution of all Orders already ſent, to be delayed or ſuſpended, until the ſenſe of the Congreſs, on the means to be taken for the preſervation of the Liberties of *America,* is made public.

An Extract from the Minutes,
Charles Thomson, *Sec.*

Printed by *W.* and *T. BRADFORD.*

After Peyton Randolph became ill, South Carolina's Henry Middleton presided over the First Continental Congress

Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia was the scene of the First Continental Congress in the autumn of 1774

The Second Continental Congress

The Second Continental Congress evolved into the government of the former colonies during the war for independence from Great Britain

As had been resolved at the close of its predecessor, the Second Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia on 10 May 1775. It would remain in session during much of the next six years, the turbulent period of the American Revolution. Many of its delegates were returning; however, among its notable new participants were Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, John Hancock of Massachusetts, and Thomas Jefferson of Virginia. Although Peyton Randolph was elected to preside, he was recalled to Virginia within days, and Jefferson attended as his replacement. Hancock succeeded Randolph as president. Twelve of the 13 colonies were initially represented as Georgia wavered, and then sent delegates who arrived two months later.

Although it was originally intended to evaluate the effectiveness of the measures passed during the First Continental Congress and to consider the state of affairs between the colonies and the British Crown, the Revolutionary War had begun three weeks prior to its opening session. Therefore, the Second Continental Congress developed into the wartime government of the colonies. Without precedent or tangible authorisation, the Congress took upon itself the functions of government, raising an army, appointing and dispatching ambassadors to foreign countries, entering into treaties and printing its own currency. Each of these endeavours was critical to the future of the Revolution and the new nation.

The early conduct of the war had been managed on a haphazard basis, and on 14 July 1775, Congress authorised the formation of the Continental Army. Virginia delegate George Washington, who wore his uniform of the state's militia to lobby for the appointment, was named its commanding general. Still, there was a forlorn hope for reconciliation and avoidance of war with the Olive Branch Petition, approved in early July by Congress but rebuffed by King George III. Concurrently, Congress approved the Declaration of the Causes and the Necessity of Taking Up Arms, delineating the colonial rationale for separation.

In Baltimore, Congress convened at Henry Fite's Tavern, some distance away from British Royal Navy ships

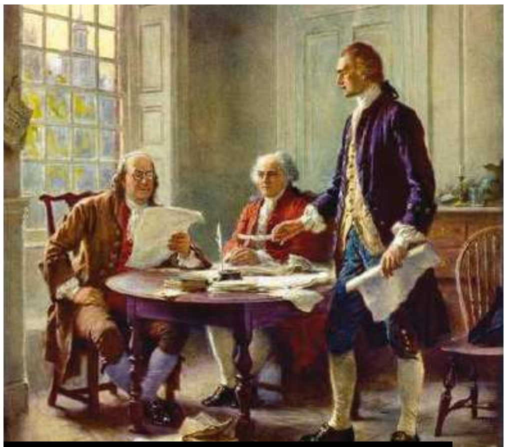
During the succeeding months, the focus of colonial ire shifted somewhat from a disdain for parliament to an open indictment of the king himself, since it had become apparent that parliament had acted with the monarch's approval. By the spring of 1776, Congress had moved decidedly towards separation, passing a resolution on 10 May encouraging those colonies whose governments were reluctant to endorse independence to reconstitute governments that were favourable to the concept. On 15 May, the Virginia Convention sent word to its delegates in Philadelphia that the former authority of the king and parliament had been dissolved in Virginia.

On 7 June 1776, Virginia delegate Richard Henry Lee rose and introduced a resolution to declare the colonies independent. Four days later, Congress appointed a 'Committee of Five' – Roger Sherman, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Robert Livingston, and Thomas Jefferson – to write the Declaration of Independence. Other committees were chosen to draft the coming Articles of Confederation, the young nation's first somewhat comprehensive governmental document, and the Plan of 1776 – or Model Treaty – intended for the conduct of international relations.

The Declaration was ratified by Congress on 4 July 1776 and published the following day, followed by the Model Treaty and the appointment of envoys to France on 24-25 September, and the Articles of Confederation on 15 November 1777, following a year of intense debate. The Articles would require more than three years of additional deliberation in the assemblies of each new state before Maryland became the last to affirm on 2 February 1781.

During its tenure, the Second Continental Congress was forced by the exigencies of war to flee Philadelphia twice before the advancing British Army, first to Baltimore in the winter of 1776 and then to Lancaster and York, Pennsylvania, in September 1777, returning to Philadelphia in early July of the following year.

The Second Continental Congress adjourned on 1 March 1781, less than a month after the ratification of the Articles of Confederation by the state assemblies. As the de facto government of the new United States, the breadth of its accomplishments was remarkable, maintaining a semblance of order amid the heightened uncertainty of war with a great power, concluding an alliance with France that ultimately ensured victory during the revolution, and undertaking the creation of an enduring form of representative government.



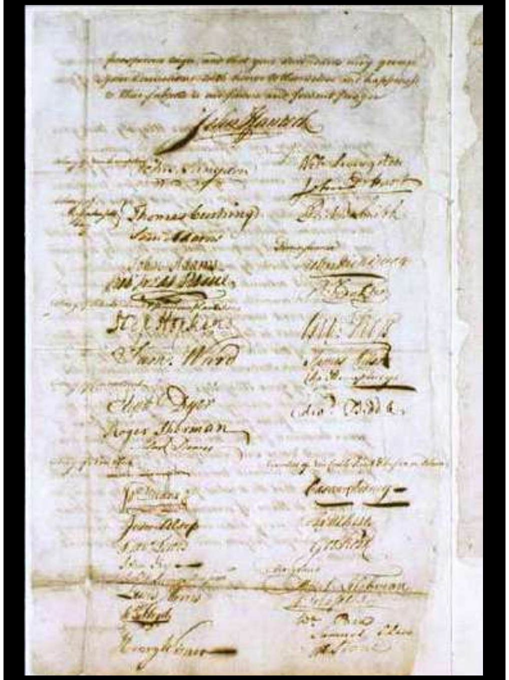
This early 20th-century image depicts Benjamin Franklin, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson working to draft the Declaration of Independence

Independence Hall in Philadelphia, where the Declaration of Independence was debated and adopted

The Olive Branch Petition

Rejected by King George III in the summer of 1775 following the battles of Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill, the Olive Branch Petition was a dead letter even before it reached the monarch. Penned chiefly by John Dickinson – at that time a delegate to the Second Continental Congress from Pennsylvania and later from Delaware – along with committee members Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay and John Rutledge, the petition followed the attempt to open negotiations with the British Crown that had been contained in the Petition to the King of 1774, and closed with the loyal phrase, "That your Majesty may enjoy long and prosperous reign, and that your descendants may govern your Dominions with honour to themselves and happiness to their subjects, is our sincere prayer."

The day after the Olive Branch Petition was approved by Congress, the Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms was crafted, sending a somewhat mixed message. Regardless, King George III had already charted a course towards war, branding the colonists as treasonous rebels. On 23 August, he had issued the Proclamation for Suppressing Rebellion and Sedition. His colonial secretary, Lord Dartmouth, informed envoys Richard Penn and Arthur Lee on 1 September 1775 that they would not receive a reply to the Olive Branch Petition.



After the Olive Branch Petition failed to open a dialogue between the colonists and the British Crown, the Revolutionary War gained momentum

Key figures

38 **George Washington**

46 **King George III**

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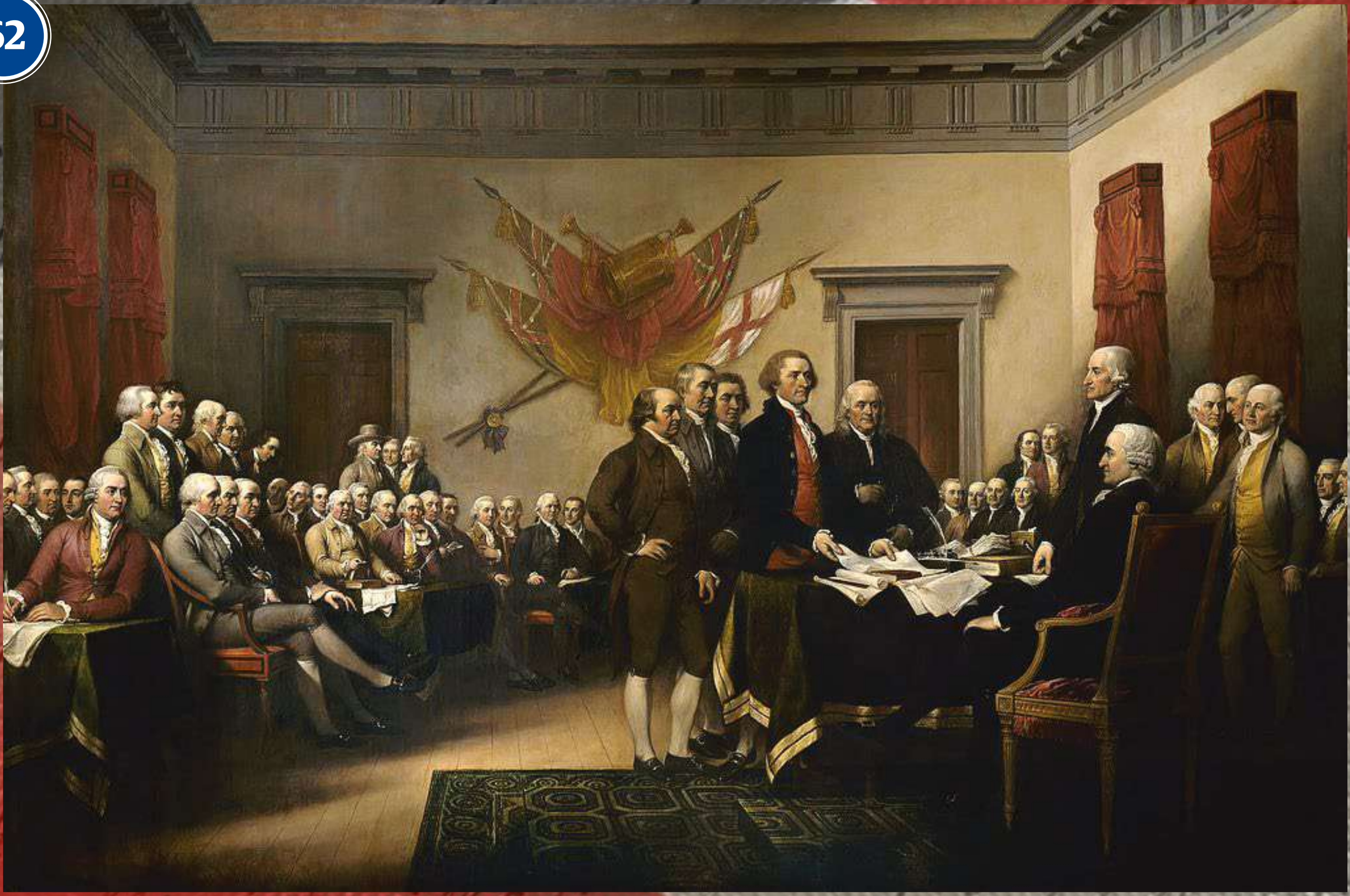

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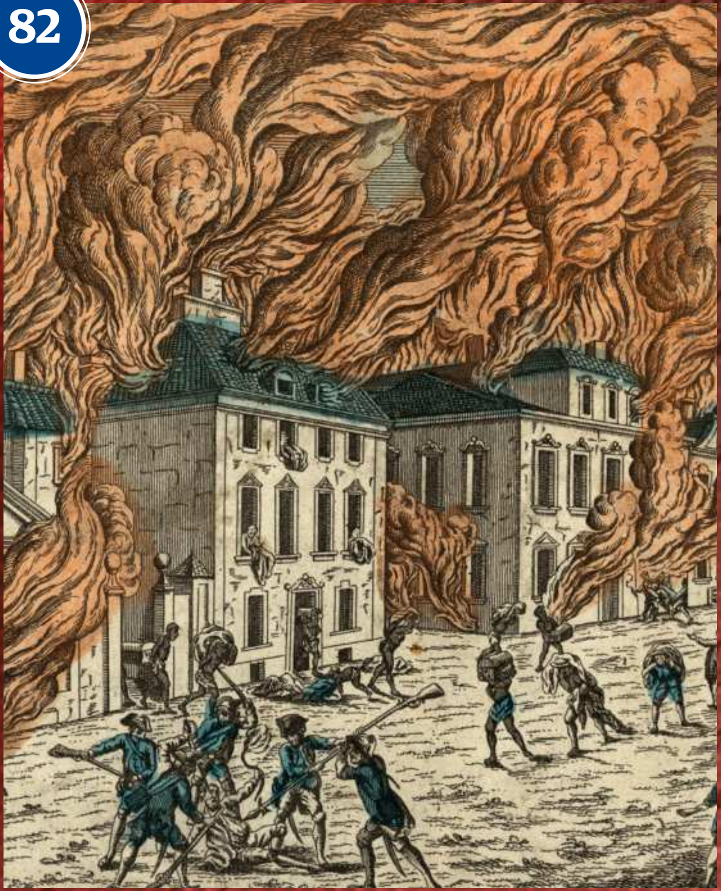

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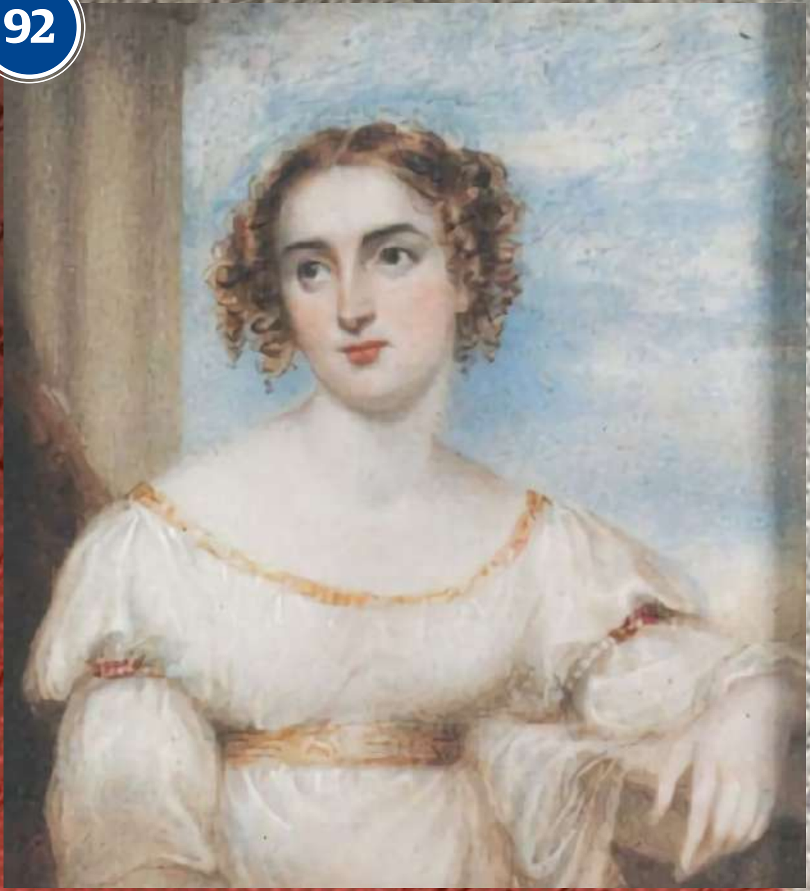


In his final will Washington freed all his slaves

THE FIRST PRESIDENT

WASHINGTON

Today George Washington is hailed as the father of the USA, but his journey to legendary hero was a perilous and difficult one

Long Island was supposed to be a success. The enemy was stronger and greater in number but the rebels had got there first. The commander had prepared everything for his foe's arrival in New York, strengthening his batteries and placing his generals perfectly. But the British had broken through. First Sullivan fell, then Stirling, and the commander could only watch as the lives of his brave men were brutally wiped away. Knowing all was lost he ordered his men to retreat before the carnage could reach them. As relentless rain pelted down he used the cover of darkness to help conceal his soldiers as they climbed into every available boat he could get his hands on. He waited until the last man was on board before he boarded himself. As the boat drew away the commander looked back through the thick fog that had descended over the bay. The mist had concealed them from the British, his men were safe, but Brooklyn had been lost.

This is not the story of a failed general, forgotten by the history books, but instead that of the most glorified and worshipped president in US history - George Washington. Just as his men were hidden by the fog that grim morning in Brooklyn, today Washington himself is cloaked and obscured by layers of myths and legends. He has become an almost messianic figure in the United States, a legend of justice and freedom, a brilliant commander who led his underdog army to the greatest victory in US history. But as with most legends, the stories are not always true. Far from being a brilliant military strategist, Washington actually lost more battles than he won. He was no Alexander or Caesar, but an entirely different kind of hero altogether - one who persevered in the face of devastating failure for his men and country.

MAKING HISTORY

Three reasons why Washington is considered the USA's greatest leader

1 VIRTUE

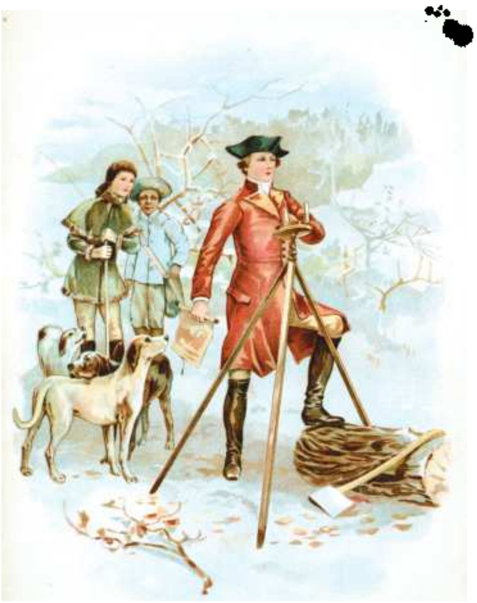
Washington twice gave up the chance of ultimate power. First at the end of the Revolutionary War when he surrendered his role as commander in chief, and again when he refused to rule as president for a third term. When George III was presented with the idea of Washington doing this, he said, "If he does that he will be the greatest man in the world."

2 COMMITMENT TO COUNTRY

Washington did not become involved in the hostile arguments and squabbling of political debates, but instead acted as a peacekeeper between the groups. A true non-partisan, his primary aim was always the betterment of the country, rather than any personal gain.

3 PERSISTENCE

Washington was not the most gifted military leader; he suffered multiple losses and personal humiliations, but his determination to persevere in spite of repeated setbacks inspired his soldiers to do the same, which resulted in him creating one of the most celebrated underdog success stories in world history.



Born on 22 February 1732, George Washington was the son of a slave-owning tobacco planter. George received a mixed education from a variety of tutors, and plans for him to join the British Royal Navy were cut short when his mother objected. Fate instead led Washington to become a surveyor, and he travelled for two years surveying land in the Culpeper, Frederick and Augusta counties. This position began a lifelong interest in landholdings, and he purchased his first piece of land as soon as his sizable income filled his pockets. And when his older brother died in 1752, Washington inherited not only his father's vast lands, but also the position of major in the Virginia militia.

It would not be long until Washington's natural leadership and drive would send him straight into the heat of battle. At a staggering 188 centimetres (6'2") tall, the young man towered above his contemporaries, and Virginia's Lieutenant General Robert Dinwiddie saw fit to use his imposing but inspiring nature to try to persuade the French to remove themselves from land claimed by Britain. When they refused, Washington returned with a small force and attacked the French post at Fort Duquesne, killing the commander and nine men and taking the others as prisoners, all in 15 minutes. The event had huge international implications, and Great Britain and France began to pump forces into North America - The French and Indian War had begun. In a matter of minutes the name Washington became synonymous with three things - bravery, daring and recklessness.

Washington was rewarded for his quick thinking by being appointed commander in chief and colonel of the Virginia Regiment, the first full-time American military unit. With command of a thousand soldiers, Washington was tasked with defending Virginia's frontier, and he demonstrated his resolve and forthright approach as his unit engaged in 20 battles over 12 months. But his reckless attitude and inexperience was demonstrated when his unit exchanged friendly fire with another British force, killing 14 men.

> "He was no Alexander or Caesar, but an entirely different kind of hero altogether"

His time commanding an army had taught Washington many things - how to bring the best out of his men, the importance of stamina and bravery, as well as discipline and training. It had also given him valuable insight into the British military tactics, and his struggles in dealing with government officials convinced him that a national government was the only way forward. However, when Washington retired from service in 1758, as far as he was concerned his time on the battlefield was over.

In 1759 Washington married the intelligent and wealthy Martha Dandridge Custis and together with her two children they moved to the plantation of Mount Vernon. Enjoying the newly inherited wealth from his marriage, Washington was now one of Virginia's wealthiest men and he concentrated on expanding and making the most out of his plantation. Little did he know that revolution was bubbling, and soon he would find himself back on the battlefield in what would become the most famous war in American history.

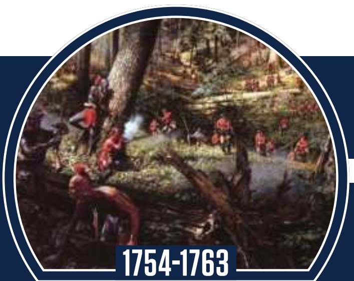
Washington wasn't the most likely of revolutionary leaders; although he opposed the controversial Stamp Act of 1765, during the early stirrings of revolution he was actually opposed to the colonies declaring independence. It wasn't until the passing of the Townshend acts of 1767 that he took an active role in the resistance. In an act of rebellion he encouraged the people of Virginia to boycott English goods until the acts were repealed. However, when the Intolerable acts were passed in 1774, Washington decided that more forthright action needed to be taken.

Passionate and charismatic, Washington was an obvious choice to attend the First Continental Congress. Although the delegates appealed to the crown to revoke the intolerable acts, they didn't even make a dink in the steely British armour, and a Second Continental Congress was called the following year.

A lot had changed in a year, and Washington too had undergone something of a transformation. The battles at Lexington and Concord had shown the colonies that they were capable of taking on the might of the British, and when Washington arrived in Pennsylvania for the state meeting dressed head to toe in military gear, it sent a strong message: he was prepared for war. So was Congress. It formed the Continental Army on 14 June 1775 and it needed a leader. Reluctant and somewhat modest,

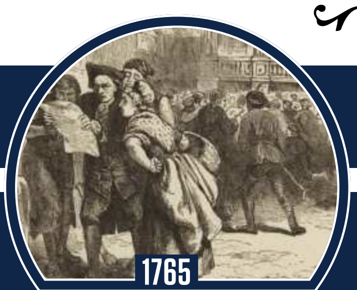
THE MARCH TO EVOLUTION

Follow the path leading to the greatest war in American history



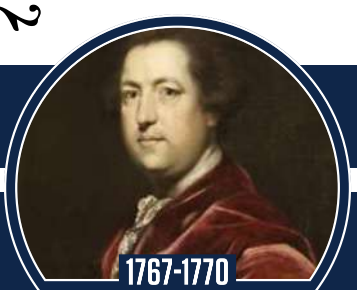
1754-1763

French and Indian War
The French and Indian War was part of a much longer conflict between Great Britain and France, known as the Seven Years War. The war was fought in the north of North America between the colonies of the two powers, ending with France losing its territory in North America. However, funding the war created a huge national debt in Britain and gave France a good reason to support American independence.



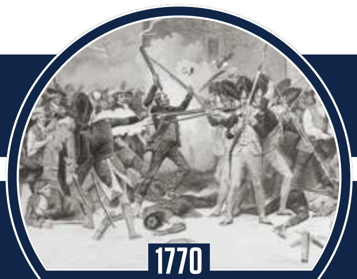
1765

Stamp Act
The resulting national debt of the Seven Years War in Britain had reached £130 million by 1764. Britain also needed a way to pay for its army in North America and decided the colonies should subsidise it. The Stamp Act forced citizens to pay taxes on documents and paper goods and was immediately unpopular as it was carried out without any consent. The outrage soon turned violent and the tax was never collected.



1767-1770

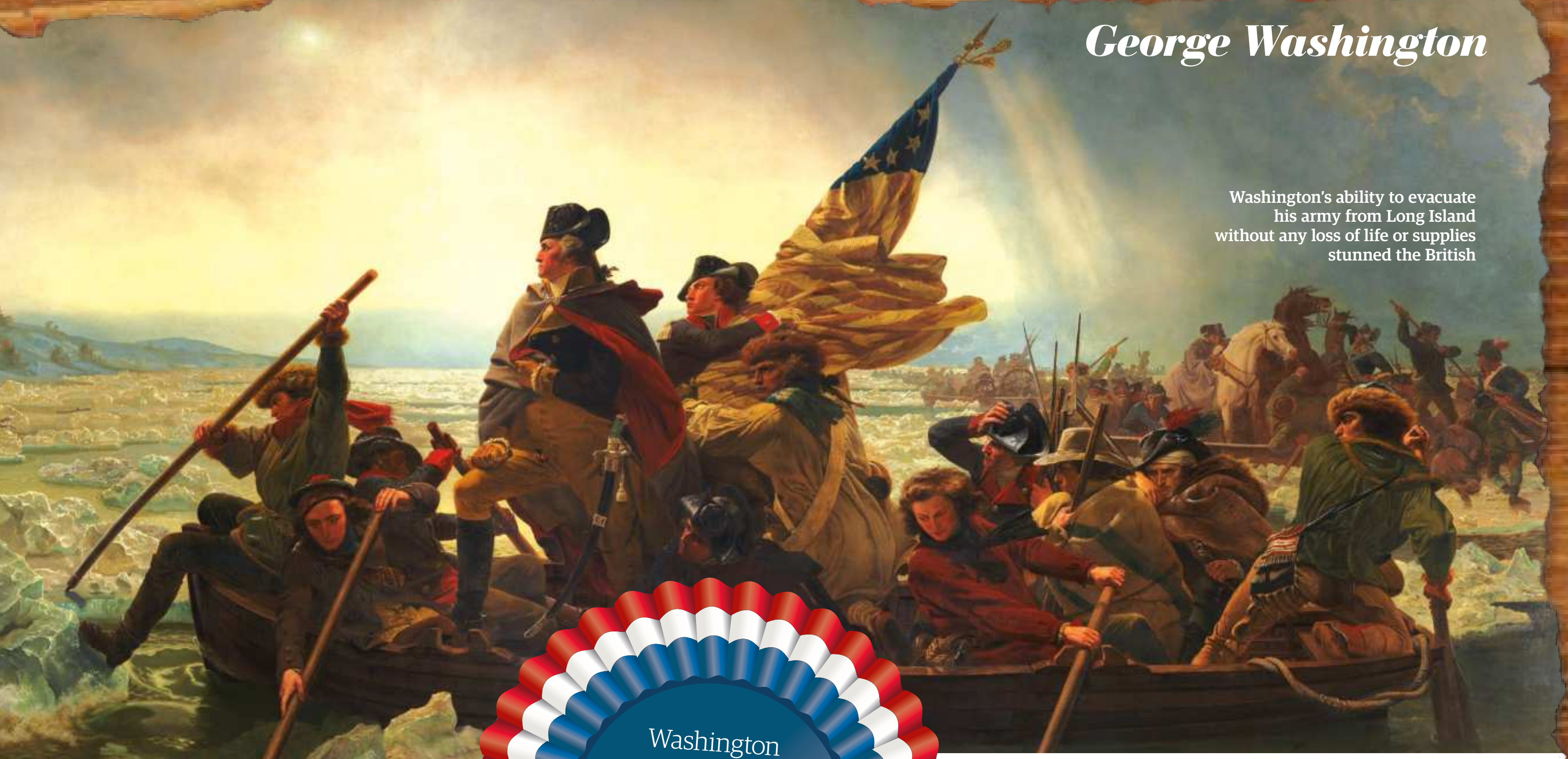
Townshend Acts
The Townshend Acts were a series of acts passed by the British Parliament upon the colonies in North America. These acts placed duties on vital, high-volume imported items such as glass, paints, paper and tea, among other things. The money raised was intended to pay to keep governors and judges loyal, and also to set a general precedent that the British had the right to tax the American colonies.



1770

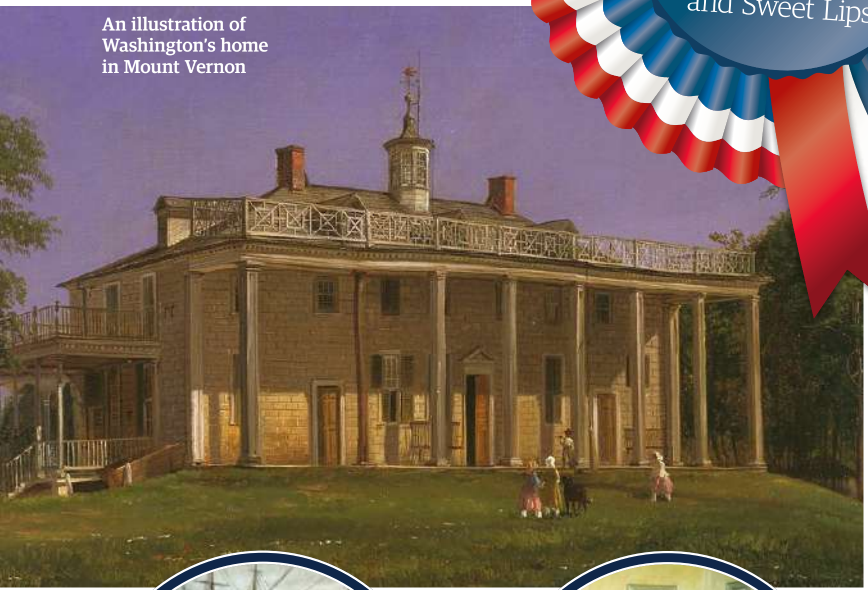
Boston Massacre
This incident occurred when a heckling crowd gathered around a British guard, who was quickly joined by eight more British soldiers. The soldiers fired at the crowd, killing three people and wounding multiple others. Two more later died of their wounds. The soldiers were arrested for manslaughter but were released without charge. This event helped to create an immensely anti-British sentiment in the colonies.

George Washington

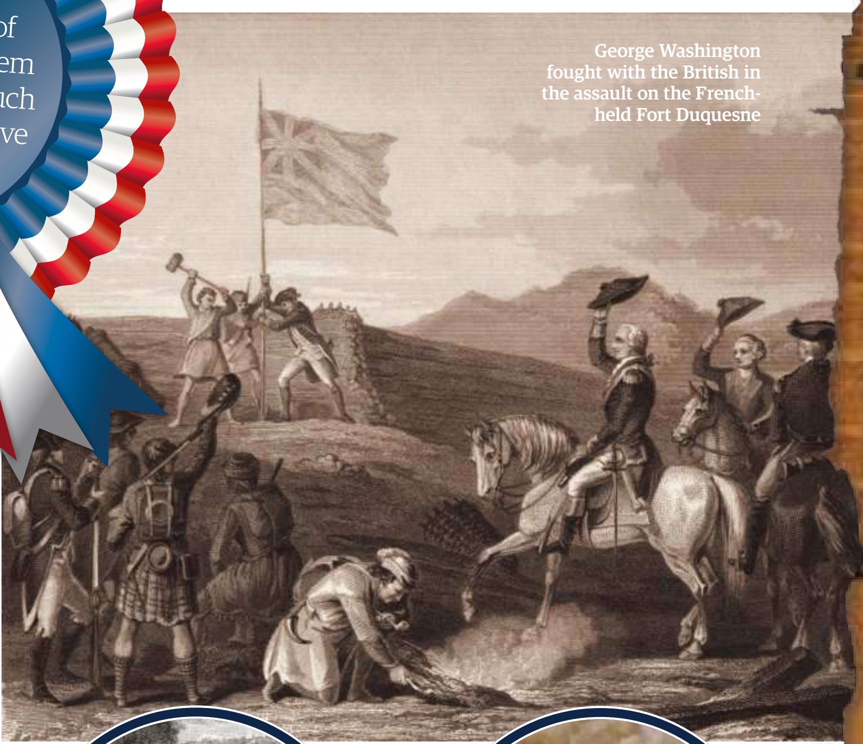


Washington's ability to evacuate his army from Long Island without any loss of life or supplies stunned the British

Washington was very fond of dogs and gave them unusual names such as Tarter, True Love and Sweet Lips



An illustration of Washington's home in Mount Vernon



George Washington fought with the British in the assault on the French-held Fort Duquesne

Boston Tea Party

In an effort to force the colonies to accept the Townshend duty on Tea, Britain passed the Tea Act, allowing the East India Company to ship its tea to North America. In defiance, protestors boarded the ships and threw chests full of tea into Boston Harbour. Parliament responded harshly, by passing the Intolerable Acts, which took away the rights of the state of Massachusetts to govern itself.

First Continental Congress

Delegates from 12 of the 13 British colonies in America met at Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia to discuss ways to halt the Intolerable Acts. They made plans to refuse to import British goods until their grievances were met. When these efforts proved unsuccessful, a Second Continental Congress was held the next year to prepare the country for the impending American Revolutionary War.

The Battles of Lexington and Concord

When American intelligence learned that British troops planned to march on Concord, they were quick to assemble their forces and take up arms against them. However only 77 militiamen faced 700 British at Lexington and were quickly defeated. The British continued to Concord to search for arms, but they were forced back by 500 militiamen, winning the colonies their first war victory.

Battle of Bunker Hill

Set during the Siege of Boston, this battle saw the British mount an attack against the colonial troops stationed in Bunker Hill and Breed's Hill. Although the British were victorious, the heavy losses suffered by the redcoats led it to be a hollow victory, and it proved the Americans could hold their own against their foes in battle. Shortly after the conflict, King George III officially declared the colonies to be in a state of rebellion.

Washington did not see himself as a leader capable of leading such a vitally important force, but for those around him there was no other choice. With proven military experience, a devoted patriot and a strong, commanding presence, Washington was appointed commander in chief of the force that would take on the mightiest nation on Earth.

It did not take very long for the new commander to prove just what he was worth. In early-March 1776, Washington turned the Siege of Boston around by placing artillery on Dorchester Heights, low hills with a good view of Boston and its harbour. The perfectly placed, powerful cannons forced the British to retreat from the city, and the American commander moved his army into New York City. Even the critical British papers couldn't deny the skills of the captivating and exciting new leader who seemed capable of repelling their great empire with ease.

Victory and gossip aside, in truth Washington was out of his depth. He had commanded men before, but only a force of a thousand soldiers - far from the tens of thousands at his disposal now. He had only fought in frontier warfare, far removed from the open-field battles he now faced. He had never commanded legions of cavalry or artillery - he was constantly learning on the job. Washington had to rely on his own intelligence and courage to have any hope of snatching victory from his seasoned, experienced rivals.

This inexperience manifested itself in the crippling defeat the commander suffered during the Battle of Long Island. In an effort to seize New York, the British general William Howe unleashed a devastating campaign that Washington failed to subdue. So great was the British attack that Washington was forced to retreat his entire army across the East River under cover of darkness. Although this feat itself was remarkable, for the self-critical leader it was a swift and brutal reminder of his own inadequacies as a general, and he quickly realised this war would not be easily won.

But the British had a crippling weakness, too. They were simply too sure they were going to win. Howe so fatally underestimated the will of the American troops and their reckless leader that he left his Hessian soldiers at Trenton, confident the war would be won in the next few months. Washington, on the other hand, was acutely aware of the morale of his soldiers. After the defeat in New York and the humiliating retreat, they needed something positive to inspire them, and Trenton was right there for the taking.

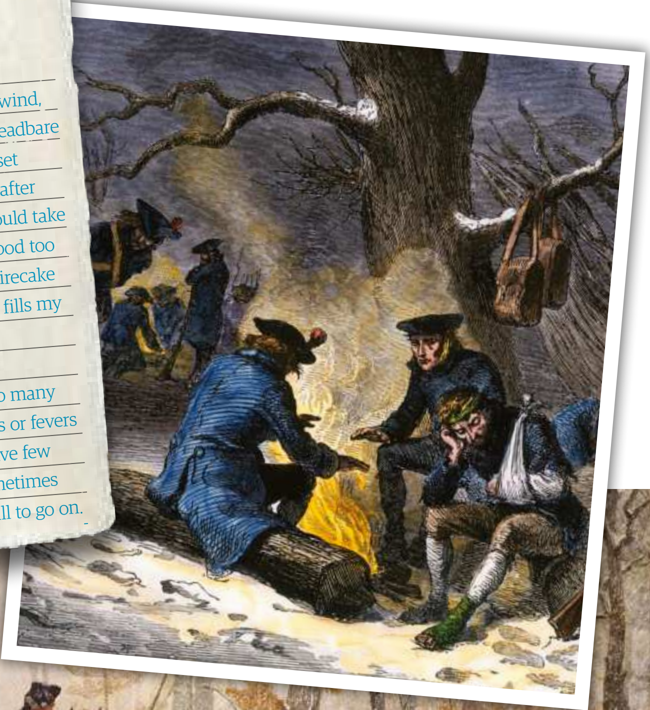
The plan was one only Washington could have thought up - bold, gutsy and downright dangerous, he led his soldiers across the perilous and icy Delaware River on a freezing Boxing Day in 1776. Only 2,400 of his men were able to make it across without turning back, but it was enough.

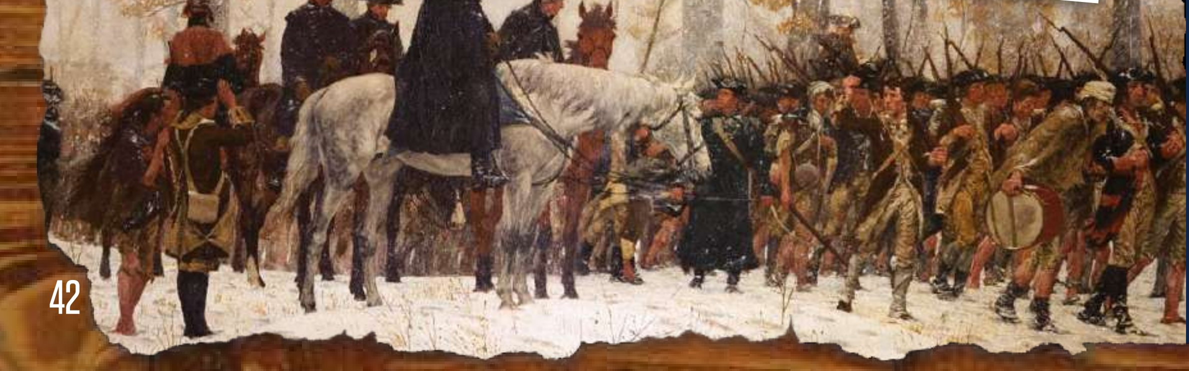
VALLEY FORGE

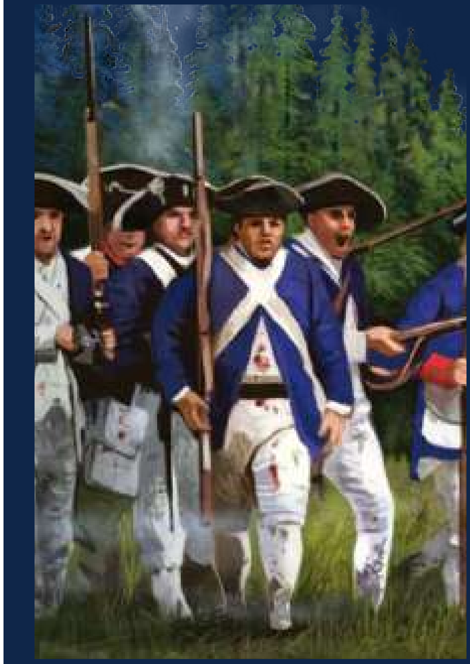
PENNSYLVANIA, 28 JANUARY 1777

The cold today was worse than it has ever been. The crowded wooden huts provide shelter from the biting wind, but the cold passes between the slats, through my threadbare shirt and nestles in my bones. My quest to procure a set of shoes continues to be unsuccessful. I thought that after marching through the snow in bare feet someone would take pity on me - but there are no supplies coming. The food too is running low. For the past week I have only eaten firecake - a sticky, bland abomination of water and flour that fills my stomach but leaves the soul ravenous.

I shouldn't complain - I am one of the lucky few untouched by the diseases that ravage the camp. So many men have been plagued by itchy rashes and blisters or fevers that refuse to calm. The only relief here are the brave few women who wash and mend our uniforms, or sometimes simply provide a shoulder to men who have no will to go on.







REBELS

Organisation

There were 35,000 continentals in the United States with 44,500 militia. Their French allies increased their numbers with 12,000 French soldiers in America and 63,000 at Gibraltar. They also had 53 ships in service throughout the war. George Washington was commander in chief and Nathanael Greene served as major general.

Weapons

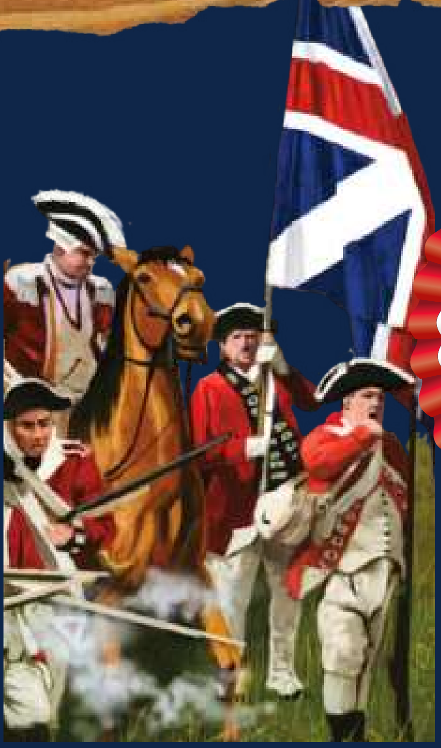
When the war began the colonies did not have a professional standing army of any kind, with many colonies only able to supply minutemen who were required to equip themselves - with most carrying rifles. The army's weapon of choice was the flintlock musket and they also carried bayonets.

Resources

The Continental Army suffered from massive supply issues. Supplies were repeatedly seized by British patrols. They also had to combat a primitive road system, which resulted in regular shortages of food, clothing, ammunition, tents and a host of essential military equipment, constantly pitching the odds against them.

Morale

The rebels' greatest weapon was the belief in their grand cause - fighting for their liberty from the oppressive British Crown. It was this strong morale belief in their cause that encouraged American leaders, who knew they were facing a well equipped and disciplined foe, to push on despite multiple crippling defeats.



REDCOATS

Organisation

There were 56,000 British redcoats in North America along with a combined force of 52,000 loyalists, freed slaves and natives. They also had 78 Royal Navy ships at their service. William Howe served as commander in chief, but there were many decorated generals and officers such as Thomas Gage and Henry Clinton.

Weapons

The British army depended on the .75-calibre flintlock musket popularly known as "Brown Bess." They also carried bayonets and, occasionally, short-barrel muskets. The redcoats also used cannons to great effect, to the degree that if an American unit was without cannon, they would not face a cannon-supported British troop.

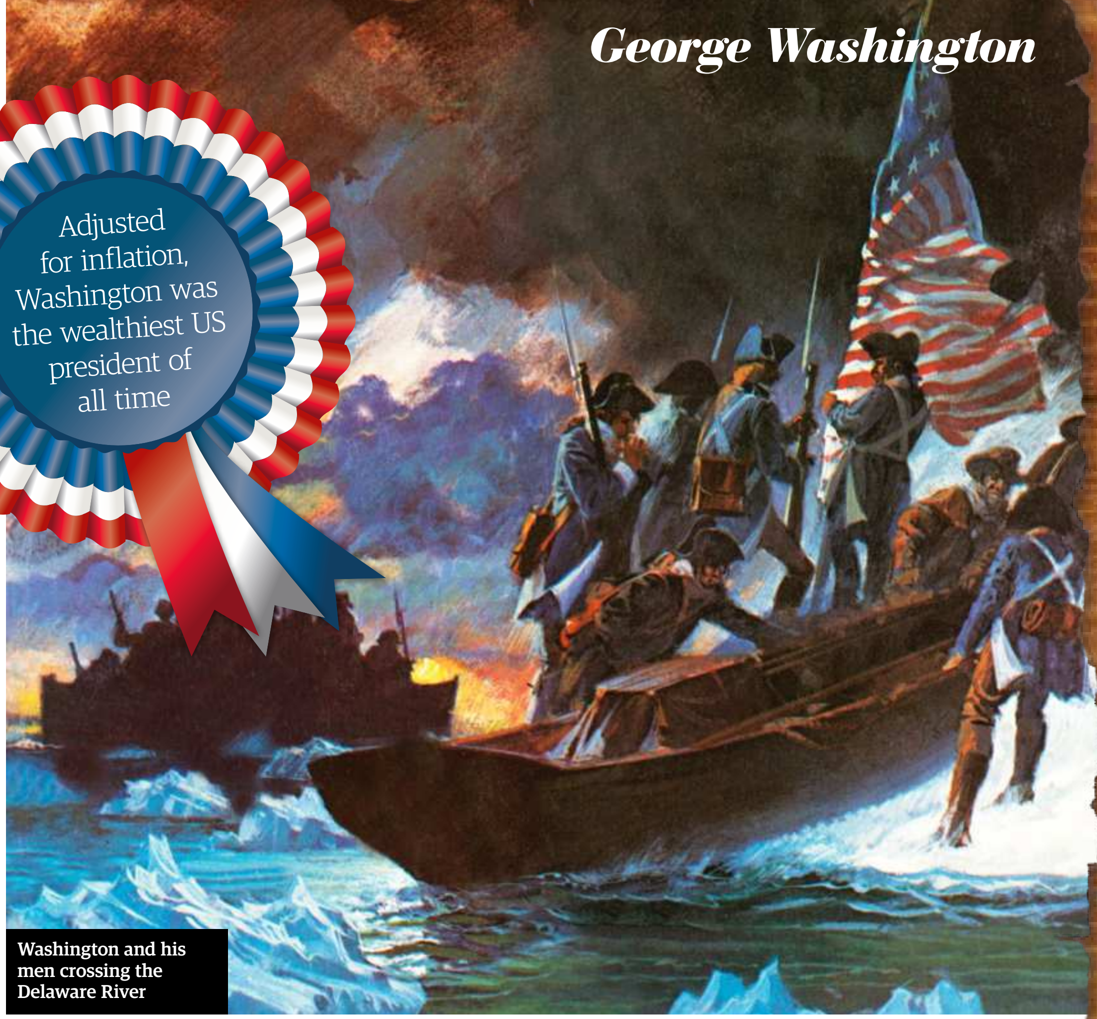
Resources

Although British soldiers were better equipped than their American counterparts, they were fighting away from home, and supplies could take months to reach their destinations. Many British had to rely on loyal locals supplying them with food and praying the vital supplies would survive the 4,800km (3,000mi) trip across the ocean.

Morale

The British believed they could easily steamroll the rebels and this underestimation of their foe cost them dearly. The war was also expensive, and support at home was mixed at best. For many soldiers struggling in terrible conditions away from home, there was little motivation to fight.

Adjusted for inflation, Washington was the wealthiest US president of all time



Washington and his men crossing the Delaware River

Completely unprepared for the attack, the Hessians at Trenton were overwhelmed and swiftly defeated by Washington and his men. A few days later the commander led a counter-attack on a British force sent to attack his army at Princeton, achieving another small - but essential - American victory.

Meanwhile, the British redcoats still believed the rebellion could be stopped like a cork in a bottle. Howe thought that by taking control of key colonial cities, the river of rebellion would turn into a drought and the population would surrender to British rule. When Howe set his sights on the revolutionary hub of Philadelphia, Washington rode out to meet him, but, perhaps with his previous victories clouding his judgement, the commander was outmatched and Philadelphia fell to the British. However, the colonists' cause received a major boon when British General Burgoyne was forced to surrender his entire army of 6,300 men at the Battle of Saratoga. It seemed that major world players were finally beginning to believe the Americans had a chance of besting the mighty British Empire, and France openly allied itself with the rebels.

While General Howe concentrated on capturing key cities, Washington had a revelation. Although individual battles were important, the key to victory was not military success, but instead his ability to keep the heart of the resistance alive and pumping.

> "When Washington retired from service in 1758, as far as he was concerned, his time on the battlefield was over"

This was something out of British hands and solely in his own.

This spirit of rebellion faced its most challenging obstacle yet over the long winter of 1977. For six long months the soldiers at the military camp of Valley Forge suffered thousands of disease-ridden deaths. With starvation rife and supplies low, many feared the horrendous conditions would force the desperate army to mutiny. Washington himself faced immense criticism from the American public and Congress, who urged him to hurry the war effort, while behind the scenes anti-Washington movements gained ground. Washington simply replied: "Whenever the public gets dissatisfied with my service [...] I shall quit the helm [...] and retire to a private life." The critics soon fell silent.

Although the conditions had been testing, to put it mildly, the soldiers emerged from the

winter in good spirits. Washington demonstrated that his sting was stronger than ever when his forces attacked the British flank attempting to leave Monmouth Courthouse. Although the battle ultimately ended in a stalemate, Washington had finally achieved what he set out to do since the beginning of the war – hold his own in a pitched battle. This was massive for the Americans; it proved the growing Continental Army was developing its skills at an alarming speed, and if the horrendous winter they had emerged from had not crushed them, what chance did the British have? The French seemed to share this attitude. On 5 September 1781, 24 French ships emerged victorious against 19 British vessels at the Battle of Chesapeake. The success prevented the British from reinforcing the troops of Lord Cornwallis, who was blockaded in Yorktown, Virginia, and allowed crucial French troops to pour into the Continental Army, bringing vast supplies of artillery with them. This was exactly the opportunity Washington needed, and he didn't plan to let it go to waste.

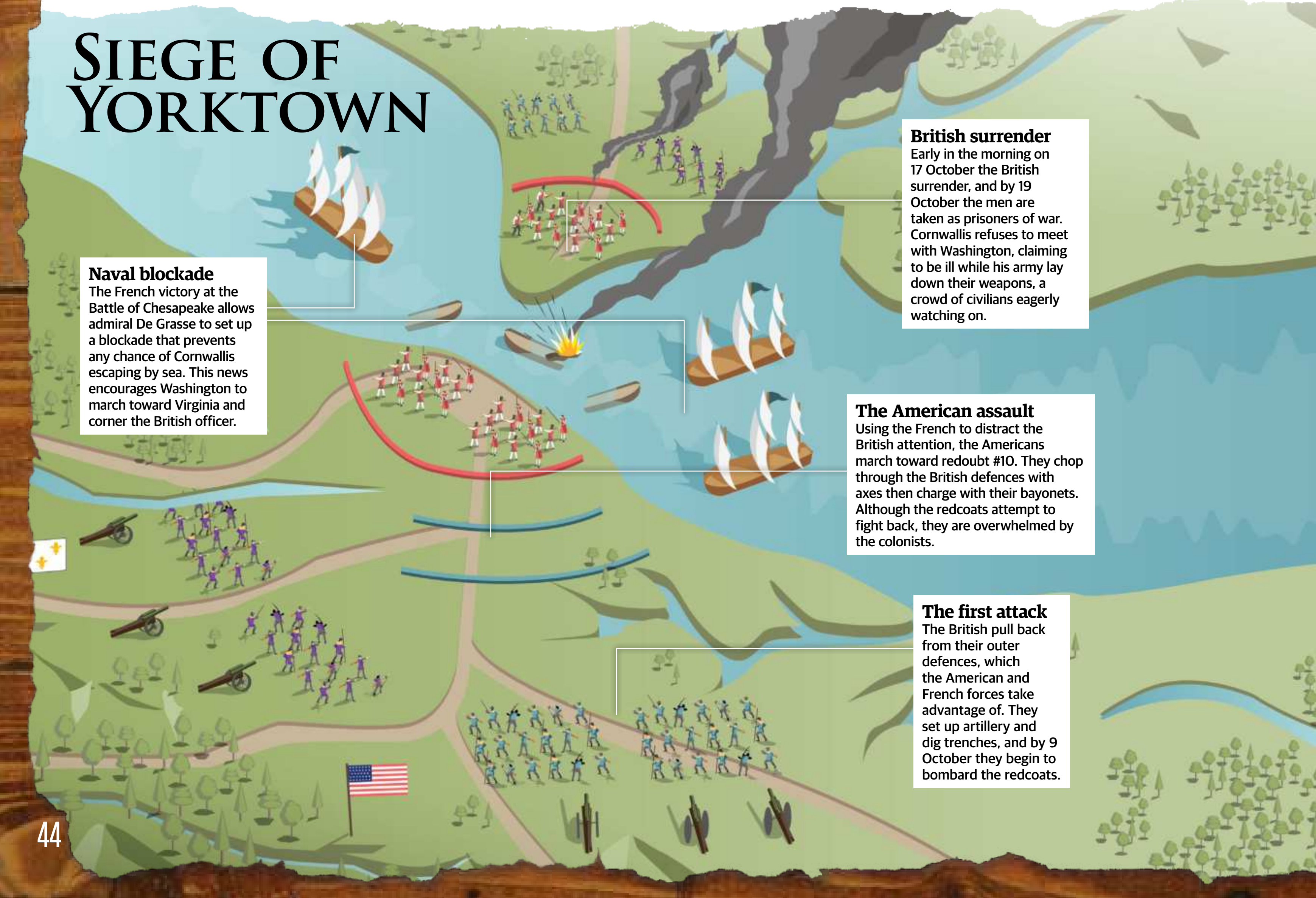
With the British army trapped and exposed, and his own swelling in size, Washington led his men out of Williamsburg and surrounded Yorktown. From late-September the Continental Army moved steadily closer to the redcoats, forcing them to pull back from their outer defences, which left them open for the Americans and French to use. As the colonists began to set up artilleries, the British pelted them with steady fire. In spite of this and at some great risk to himself, Washington continued to visit and motivate his men on the front line, and by 5 October the commander was ready to make his move.

As a vicious storm raged, Washington grasped his pickaxe in his hand and struck several blows into the dirt that would become the new trench the Americans would use to bombard the British. By 5pm on 9 October, the Americans were pelting the British with a relentless stream of cannon fire. The British ships were sunk and soldiers deserted en masse. More American trenches were dug as they gained land, and when Washington's men rushed toward the British redoubt, they overwhelmed the surprised redcoats. As Washington rained artillery fire down on the town, Cornwallis's attempts at escape across the York River were unsuccessful and he finally surrendered.

Little did Washington know that the victory he had secured at Yorktown would lead to the ultimate surrender of British hostilities, the end of the war and ultimately American freedom. On 3 September 1783 the Treaty of Paris was signed between representatives of both countries, which proclaimed that Britain recognised the independence of

The Capitol in Washington, D.C., under construction

SIEGE OF YORKTOWN

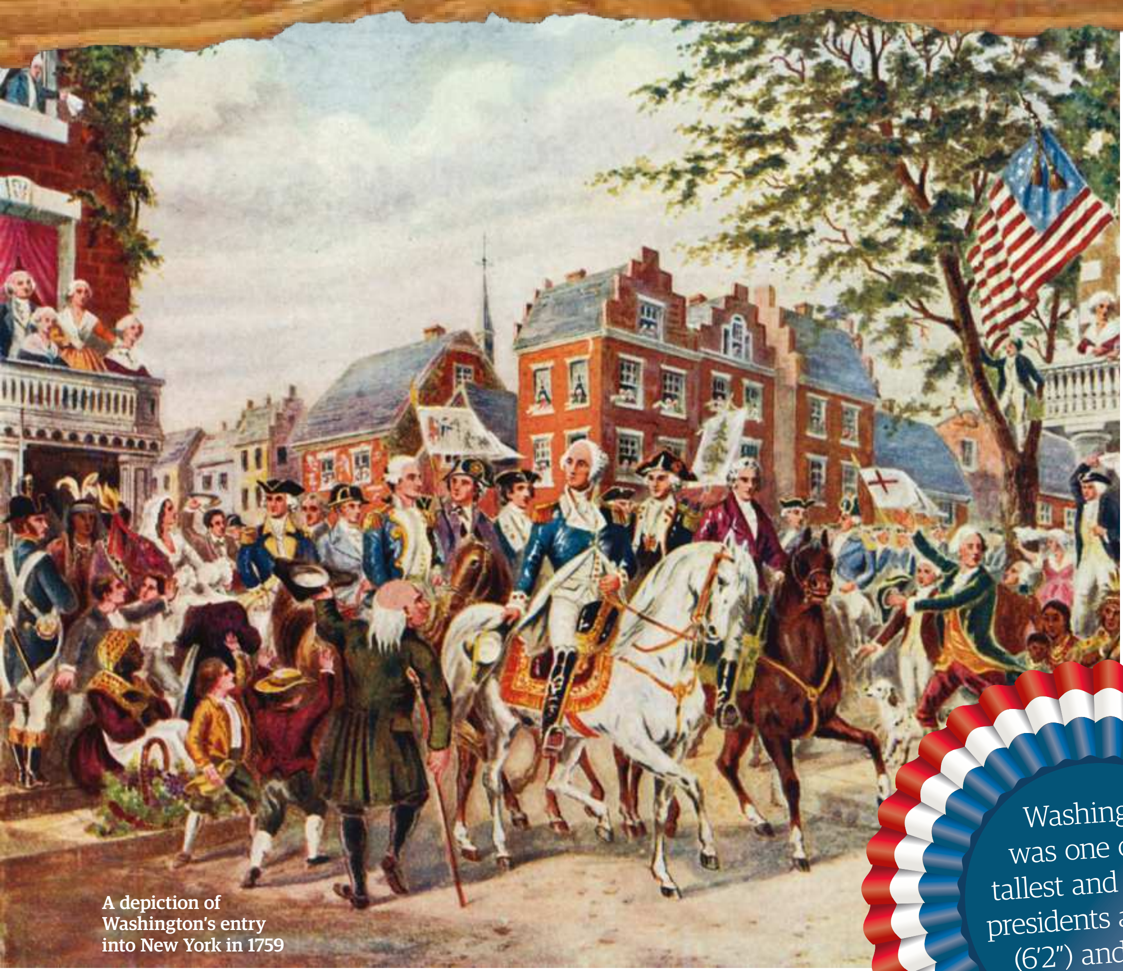


Naval blockade
The French victory at the Battle of Chesapeake allows admiral De Grasse to set up a blockade that prevents any chance of Cornwallis escaping by sea. This news encourages Washington to march toward Virginia and corner the British officer.

British surrender
Early in the morning on 17 October the British surrender, and by 19 October the men are taken as prisoners of war. Cornwallis refuses to meet with Washington, claiming to be ill while his army lay down their weapons, a crowd of civilians eagerly watching on.

The American assault
Using the French to distract the British attention, the Americans march toward redoubt #10. They chop through the British defences with axes then charge with their bayonets. Although the redcoats attempt to fight back, they are overwhelmed by the colonists.

The first attack
The British pull back from their outer defences, which the American and French forces take advantage of. They set up artillery and dig trenches, and by 9 October they begin to bombard the redcoats.


A depiction of Washington's entry into New York in 1759

Washington has been immortalised on Mount Rushmore along with Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln

Washington was one of the tallest and biggest presidents at 1.88m (6'2") and 90kg (200lb)

the United States. With victory declared, Washington disbanded his army and wished farewell to the men who had valued him not only as a leader, but also a fellow soldier. On 23 December 1783, in an action that would define him in the history books, he resigned as commander in chief of the army and humbly returned to his home in Mount Vernon.

However, without him his country was struggling. With nobody to unite them the states fought and squabbled among themselves over boundaries and inflicted harsh taxes on their own citizens. The ex-commander watched from afar as the land he had led to freedom struggled to support itself. He was dismayed, but hesitant to act. It wasn't until an armed uprising known as Shays' Rebellion took place in Massachusetts that Washington was finally persuaded to step into the limelight once more.

Washington quietly attended the Constitution Convention held in Philadelphia in 1787. There he sat and listened silently to the proceedings, speaking only once. However, his prestige spoke volumes and those gathered there agreed the national government needed more authority - it needed a figure strong and commanding enough to maintain control. Washington was unanimously chosen to fulfil this role. He became president of the convention in 1787, and by 1789 he was unanimously elected once more, but this time as the first-ever president of the United States - the only one in history to receive 100 per cent of the votes. He would serve two terms as president from 1789 to 1797 until he would yet again relinquish the power he could so easily have exploited. In the spring of 1797, he finally returned to his precious Mount Vernon, realising, perhaps more so than any one of the many people who supported him, that ultimate power in the land of the free could not lay solely in one man's hands indefinitely.

> "Washington did not see himself as a leader capable of leading such a vitally important force"

WASHINGTON MYTHS CUT DOWN

We get an expert opinion on the myths surrounding this legendary man

Stephen Brumwell is a freelance writer and independent historian living in Amsterdam. His book, *George Washington: Gentleman Warrior*, won the 2013 George Washington Book Prize.

He had wooden teeth

George Washington was plagued with dental problems from his twenties, and by 1789, had just one of his own teeth remaining. He owned several sets of false teeth, but none was crafted from wood. Instead, Washington's dentures incorporated a variety of materials - bone, 'sea-horse', or hippopotamus ivory, and human teeth - fixed by lead, gold and metal wire. The belief that Washington's false teeth were wooden probably originated in the brown-stained appearance of surviving examples - apparently owing to his fondness for port wine.

He cut down a cherry tree and confessed to his father

Perhaps the best known of all the legends spun around Washington, the 'cherry tree story' first surfaced in a biography written after his death by Mason Locke Weems. Concerned with portraying Washington as an exemplary role model for his countrymen, 'Parson Weems' concocted the fable of the six-year-old hatcheting his father's prized cherry tree, and then deflecting parental wrath by frankly confessing to the deed with the words "I can't tell a lie, Pa."

Washington was a moonshiner

While there's no proof that Washington set up illicit liquor stills to make moonshine, he was certainly in the forefront of American whiskey production. On the advice of his Scottish farm manager, James Anderson, he established a whiskey distillery at Mount Vernon in 1797. By the year of Washington's death, 1799, this was producing almost 41,640l (11,000gal) of rye and corn whiskey, making it the largest US distillery of its day.

He threw a silver dollar across the Potomac River

Standing 188cm (6'2") tall, and with a well-muscled physique, young George Washington was renowned for his strength. Yet even Washington in his prime would have struggled to hurl a silver dollar across the Potomac River, which is more than 1.6km (1mi) wide opposite his Virginian home at Mount Vernon. Also, silver dollars were only introduced in 1794, when Washington was already in his sixties.

He wore a wig

Although wigs were fashionable during Washington's lifetime, he never wore one, preferring to keep his own hair, which was reddish-brown, long and tied back in a tight queue, or 'pigtail'. However, Washington regularly used the white hair powder that was customary among men of his wealthy social class, especially for formal occasions, and this gave the impression of a wig, apparent in many of his portraits.

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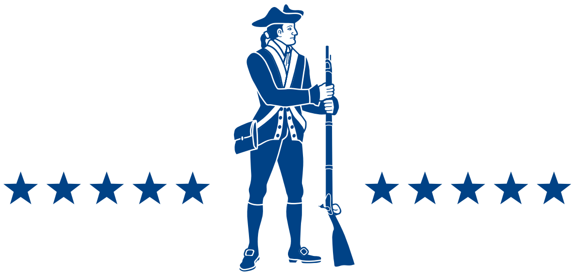


The king who lost America

The story of how one monarch influenced the American Revolution

Remembered mostly for his madness and his role as the antagonist of the American Revolution, George III has gone down in history as one of the worst British monarchs ever. But did he actually deserve his dastardly reputation - and what was really his role in the loss of America?

Born in the comfort of a Westminster mansion on 4 June 1738, George III would become Britain's longest-reigning king. Throughout his long life, he would see revolution spread like wildfire across many different parts of the globe. Vilified as an incompetent brute by the American Revolutionaries and scorned by historians decades after his death, he has been a much-maligned figure. But George III's reign was in reality far more complex, filled with political and personal crises that would both complicate his legacy and take a severe toll on his mental health.

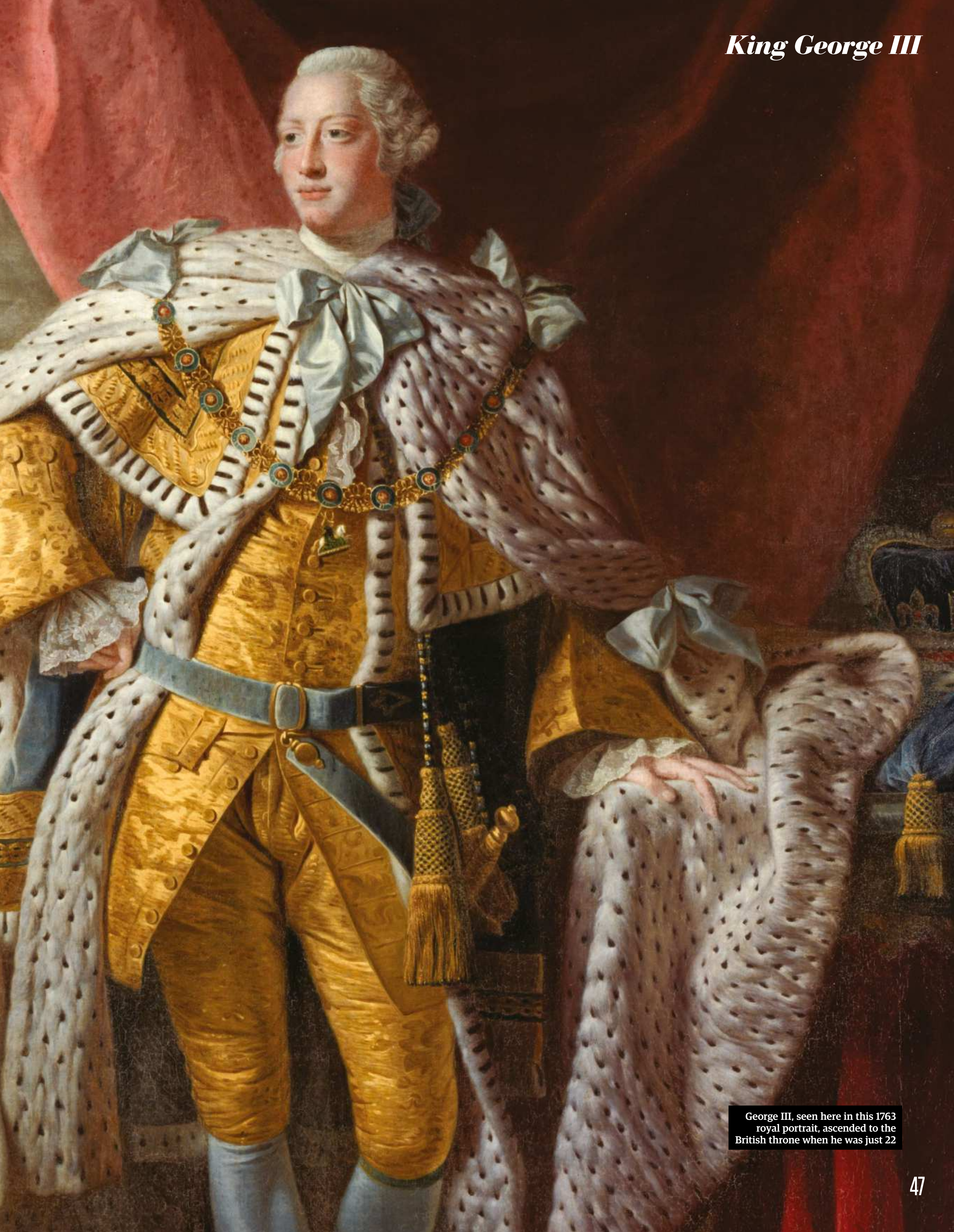
After the death of his father in 1751, the teenage George became heir to the Hanoverian throne of Great Britain. Despite his destiny, the young boy remained an unlikely king. Shy and lacking confidence in himself, he preferred to immerse himself in his hobbies. His mother was also a strong-willed woman who had a remarkable influence on him. She was devoted to her family, and passed her religiosity and sense of moral duty onto her son. "George, be king," she said, setting him firmly on the path to the crown.

King George III ignored the pleas of the Americans and chose to label the rebel leaders traitors

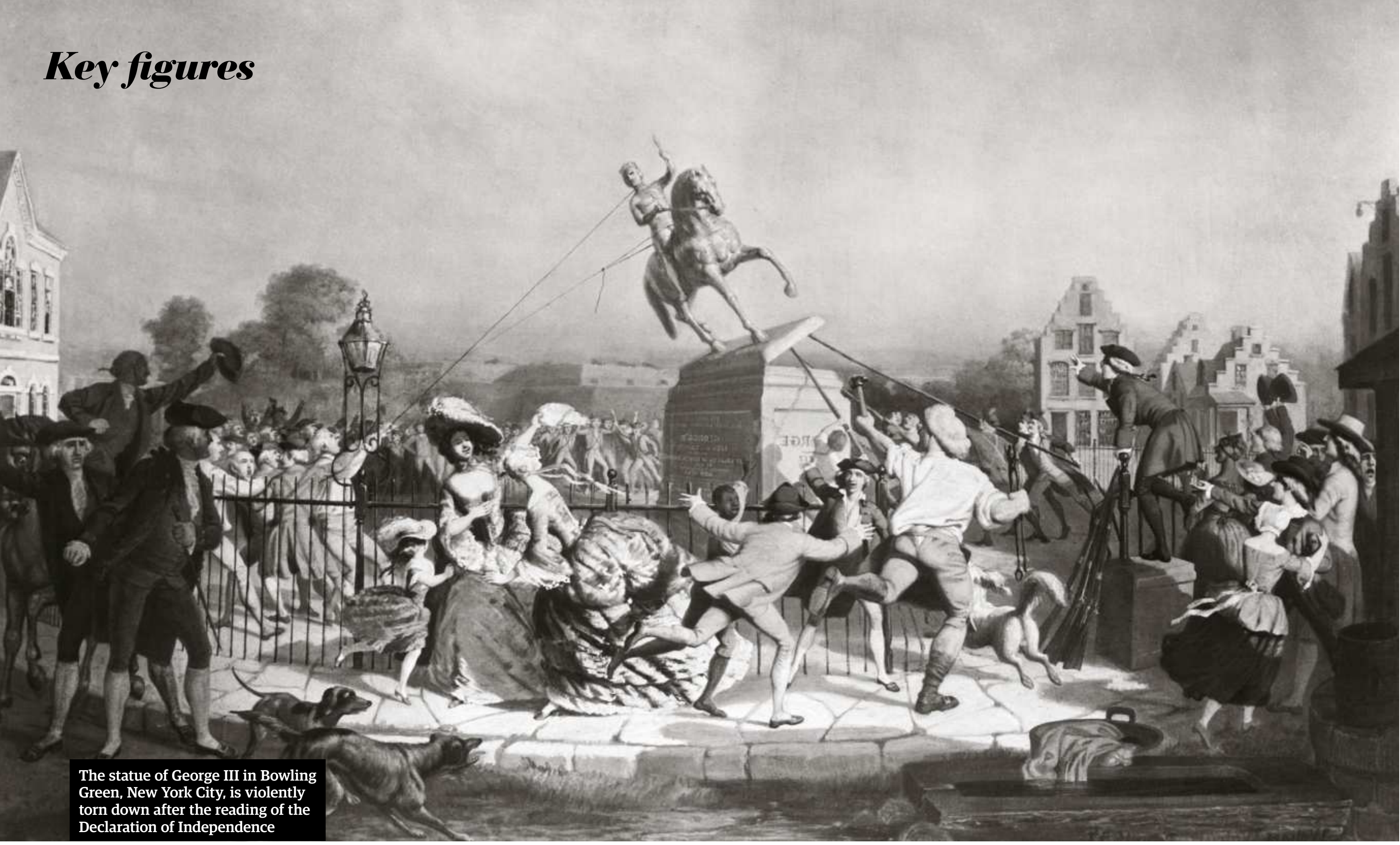
To help in her efforts, she employed the 3rd earl of Bute, John Stuart, as a tutor to George. Despite rumours in the press of a torrid affair between the two, the young George looked up to Bute greatly. Perhaps the charismatic earl seemed like the father George had long been missing. Under Bute's influence, George was taught the art of politics and diplomacy, albeit as Bute saw it - which did not turn out to be particularly perceptive. In fact, Bute actively encouraged George to isolate himself from key political figures. This was a grave error, considering that George was ill-experienced in politics and could well have utilised the politicians' extensive knowledge to his advantage.

George became so reliant on Bute that he was unable to see how the earl's tactics were doing him more harm than good. At the age of 20, he wrote to Bute: "In what a pretty pickle I should be in a future day, if I had not your sagacious counsels." The growing mistrust of the future king from his parliamentary colleagues did not bode well for the future.

At the time of his ascension to the British throne in 1760, George III was just 22. It had become the norm for kings to take a passive role in ruling since the turmoil of the Glorious Revolution had threatened to destroy the monarchy altogether. But George III wanted to get actively involved in the politics of the day, much to the annoyance of the government. Steered by Bute, George III did away with many wise politicians he simply



George III, seen here in this 1763 royal portrait, ascended to the British throne when he was just 22


The statue of George III in Bowling Green, New York City, is violently torn down after the reading of the Declaration of Independence

happened to dislike, including William Pitt the Elder, who resigned from his post in 1761 after a series of disagreements.

One of the most pressing matters of state was the Seven Years' War, which had been raging since 1756. George III had inherited this conflict when it was at its height. As Anglo- and French-Americans had continued skirmishes over the boundaries of their territories, their mother countries – Britain and France – stepped in, seeking to protect their prized possessions. War raged on for years, costing the European powers a considerable amount of money and manpower.

Eventually, Britain won out in 1763. It gained much of France's former possessions in North America, including a significant part of Canada, and all French territories east of the Mississippi. Britain also made some gains from Spain, which had allied with France during the war and therefore, in the minds of British policymakers, forfeited their right to territory in North America. So, Britain added Florida to its colonial possessions across the Atlantic. Britain was now the dominant power on the North American continent.

However, George III and the British Government were faced with quite the predicament. While they had won the war, their finances were almost completely in ruin. The national debt meant that Britain needed to be paying off £4 million annually in order to stay afloat. They were now responsible for a vast tract of land and all its people, which the war-impoverished nation had not bargained for – but equally, did not wish to lose, for fear of losing face internationally.

Later that year, Bute deserted King George III and resigned from his post as prime minister. George Grenville was his replacement, and he had an appealing solution to the British government's debt problem. Grenville reasoned that as America

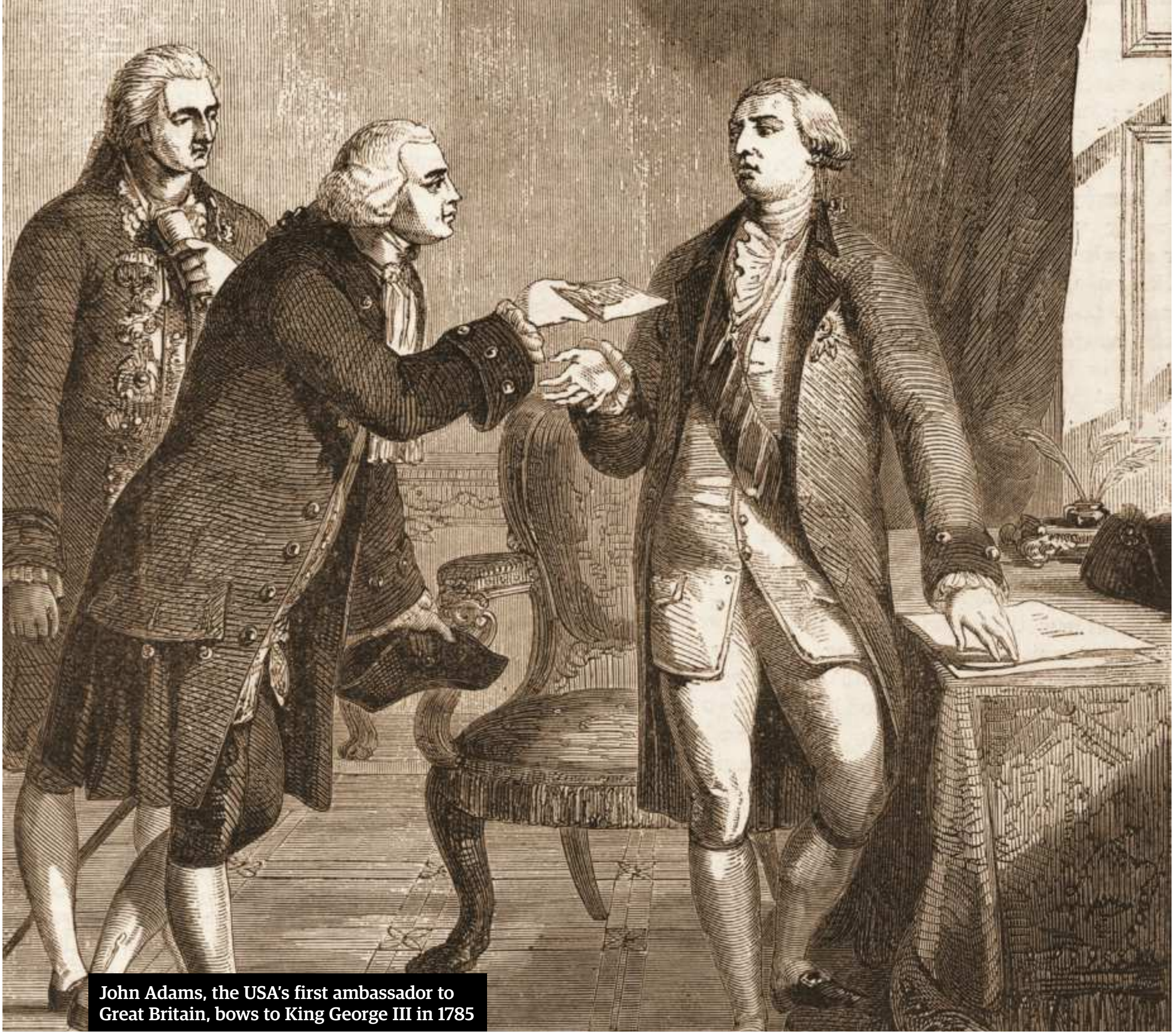
Georgian Papers Programme

Incredibly, a vast tract of original papers written by George was discovered in the basement of Apsley House, the duke of Wellington's London home, in World War I. They remained in storage for a century, but the new millennium heralded an unmissable opportunity for Georgian historians to see George III in a totally new light.

350,000 papers on the American Revolution – mostly written by the monarch himself, as he did not have a secretary – have been preserved, and in April 2015 Queen Elizabeth II opened these archives to historians. Only 15 per cent of these have currently been viewed in print but they reveal a hidden side of the king.

As well as providing a ground-breaking, new perspective on the American Revolution (which has primarily been viewed through the eyes of the Americans), they show that George was above all else a committed family man, who cared for the future of his children more than anything. Some of the papers were published online in 2017, making them accessible to all.

This mahogany desk was used by George III for 40 years, where he worked tirelessly



John Adams, the USA's first ambassador to Great Britain, bows to King George III in 1785

had benefitted from the Seven Years' War, and the colonists had been saved from French encroachers (now requiring British troops stationed there to protect them), they ought to pay for their own defence. He wished to levy taxes on the colonists as a way to fill the British coffers – without increasing their representation in parliament. King George, a frugal man by nature, was swayed by this idea.

So, over the next few years, Parliament imposed a series of deeply unpopular taxes on America known as the Townshend Duties. The brainchild of Chancellor of the Exchequer Charles Townshend, they were openly supported by George III. One such duty was the Stamp Act of 1765, which raised money from all printed materials in the colonies. This had a fairly wide-reaching impact, but it especially irritated the pamphleteers (famous for criticising Britain and its king), for whom their activities were made all the more expensive.

Leading politicians at the time – even in Britain – objected to this draconian policy. Edmund Burke and Pitt the Elder were among the most vocal critics, saying that it was logistically very difficult to properly collect revenue from the other side of the world. The Stamp Act was repealed a year later, after George III and the British parliament relented. Colonists rejoiced, erecting a gilded statue of their benevolent king striking a power pose on his horse in Bowling Green, New York City.

Another of Townshend's policies was a duty on tea imported by the East India Company. This quickly riled up the colonist rebels, such as George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. They were angry at the fact the British government could tax Americans however they wished, without Americans being able to have their say in parliament. "No taxation without representation!" became their rallying cry, and the so-called Sons of Liberty encouraged Americans to join the rebellion, culminating in the Boston Tea Party of 1773.

Of course, not all Americans immediately wanted to throw off their British-made shackles and get rid of George. A substantial sect of the American population – as many as 20 per cent – called themselves 'Loyalists', and believed the Thirteen Colonies should ultimately stay by the side of king and country. They were in frequent communication with the monarch and his government, sending many letters of support and pledges that if it came to war, hundreds of thousands of people would soon be ready to put down the insurgents.

Prominent loyalists included the Hooper shipping family of Massachusetts. Worried about how the actions of the revolutionaries would affect their business prospects, they asked their state's governor to meet with King George, and to ask him to "moderate the resentment of the [British] government against us". Knowing that this resentment was probably caused by them, the American Patriots were outraged at this betrayal.

Nonetheless, even as tensions between Loyalists and Patriots escalated, George III was not yet the main antagonist in the Revolution. It was mostly

> "Colonists rejoiced, erecting a gilded statue of their benevolent king striking a power pose on his horse"

Nigel Hawthorne stars as King George in the award-winning 1994 film adaptation of Bennett's play

The madness of King George

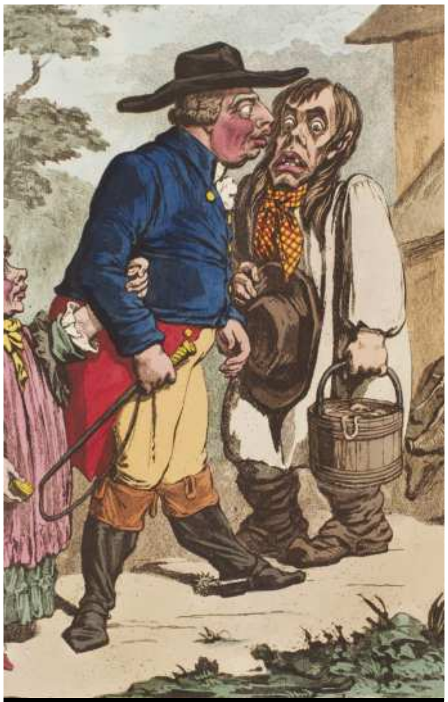
George is perhaps best known for his mental state

As well as 'losing' the colonies, George is famous for a more sinister reason – his mental derangement, which set in in the later part of his reign. His health had often been fragile as a child and as the pressure of ruling a rebellious empire mounted, George's mental state deteriorated.

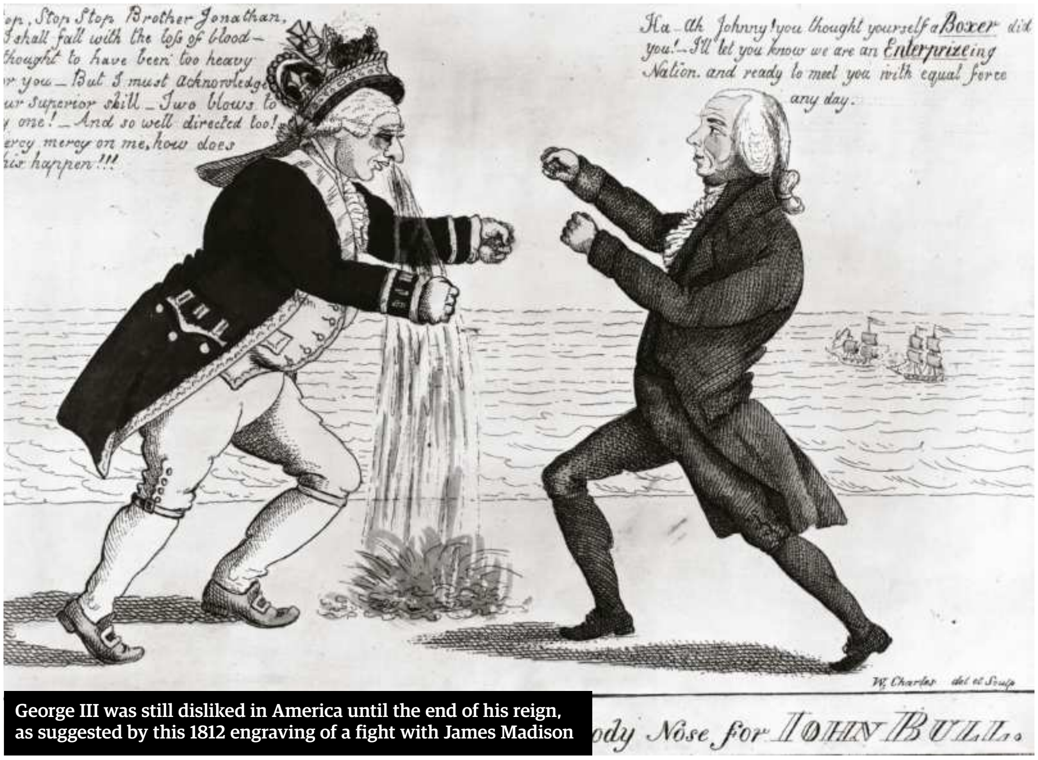
George first had a mental breakdown in 1778, but he recovered and ruled for 12 more years, with only hints that his sanity was at risk. In 1804, as Napoleon waged war in Europe, the king was struck down with another bout of mental instability, but again recovered. Finally, in 1810, George's mental health was damaged beyond repair and he succumbed to a bout of insanity from which he never returned. His son, the future George IV, acted as regent while his father was incapacitated.

By examining his symptoms and evidence from the time, scholars have diagnosed George with porphyria, a disease that impacts the central nervous system. By testing samples of his hair, scientists found he had over 300 times the normal concentration of arsenic in his system, which may have worsened the problem – despite the fact it might have been used as medication to treat it.

Indeed, the damning 1991 play *The Madness of George III* by Alan Bennett shows the king as a mere political pawn, struggling to maintain his sanity in a world of plots against him.



King George III and his wife Queen Charlotte are depicted in this satirical Georgian cartoon, attempting to befriend a British peasant


op, Stop Stop Brother Jonathan,
I shall fall with the loss of blood—
thought to have been too heavy
r you—But I must acknowledge
ur superior skill—Two blows to
y one!—And so well directed too!
ercy mercy on me, how does
his happen!!!
Ha—Ah Johnny! you thought yourself a Boxer did you!—I'll let you know we are an Enterprizeing Nation. and ready to meet you with equal force any day.
W. Charles del et Sculp
ody Nose for JOHN BULL.

George III was still disliked in America until the end of his reign, as suggested by this 1812 engraving of a fight with James Madison

The hobbyist king

How the monarch spent his free time

Even while he was on the throne, King George was being parodied in popular culture, just as he is today. Throughout his life he had a great interest in farming and agriculture, even preferring to live in Windsor Castle so he could keep an eye on his estate. For this, he was mockingly nicknamed 'farmer George', but it later became a term of endearment.

George III's preoccupation with his hobbies, while scorned by some, actually helped to bring about advances in these fields – especially science. His Majesty accumulated a vast collection of stargazing instruments, built observatories, and even helped fund the great scientific minds of the day such as William Herschel. Herschel was so grateful to the king that he named one of his discoveries 'Georgium Sidus', or George's Star, after his patron. This discovery is now known as the planet Uranus.

George III also loved the arts, especially German opera. He even wrote a full concert programme consisting mainly of George Frideric Handel's music. Although the famed composer had died before George ascended the throne, he remained the king's favourite composer for a long time.

parliament that was giving Americans grief – the king was simply a background figure. However, George's unwavering support of parliament was starting to breed discontent and suspicion among Americans. Their hostility to him soon passed the point of no return and revolt was heavy in the air. The monarch was sensitive to this mood. In a letter to the prime minister, George wrote: "The die is now cast. The colonies must either submit or triumph. I do not wish to come to severed measures, but we must not retreat". Additionally, the clampdown on the rebellious state of Massachusetts added insult to injury, as the British government took away the state's right to self-governance and punished its leaders. These events became known as the Intolerable Acts to Americans, who began to organise themselves into what became the First Continental Congress.

One year later, the Second Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia. In a last-ditch attempt to stop a full-blown uprising, a congressman from Pennsylvania, John Dickinson, suggested reaching out to George III – after all, most Americans did not actually desire to overthrow him, and some even hoped that he might be a friend to the colonists, as he was seen to be less malicious than parliament. Revolutionaries such as John Adams opted to remain quiet and observe how this attempt panned out, so the Continental Congress agreed to Dickinson's idea, which became known as the Olive Branch Petition.

Their hopes for reconciliation were dashed when the petition made landfall in Britain. As the Battles of Lexington and Concord had recently broke out, King George refused even to receive the petition from the Americans, and worse still, he declared the colonies to be in "open and avowed rebellion". Thankfully for the Patriots, this worked in their favour, as they could now easily turn the American people against the British king.

Though the Declaration Act was passed in 1776, reminding America that it was entirely subordinate to British rule and was subject to whatever taxes Britain wished to levy, this meagre attempt at re-establishing dominance fell on deaf ears. The Declaration of Independence was drafted, and in no uncertain terms decried George as a "tyrant" who was "unfit to rule a free people". The golden statue of him in Bowling Green was violently torn down and the monarch now became the focal point of America's grievances with Britain.

Watching the War of Independence unfold from across the ocean, George found his power marginalised, but it's said he kept a close eye on the conflict's progress by studying war maps. While Britain had some success in the early stages of the conflict, by 1781 it became clear that Britain was on the losing side. Charles Cornwallis, one of the generals leading the British forces, had already surrendered to American and French forces. To all intents and purposes, the war was lost.

Besides, by this point, parliament was tiring of the expensive fighting. British public opinion had also shifted, beginning to favour shedding the burden of the rebellious colonies altogether. George had even considered abdicating the throne because the war had taken such a toll on his fragile mental and physical health.

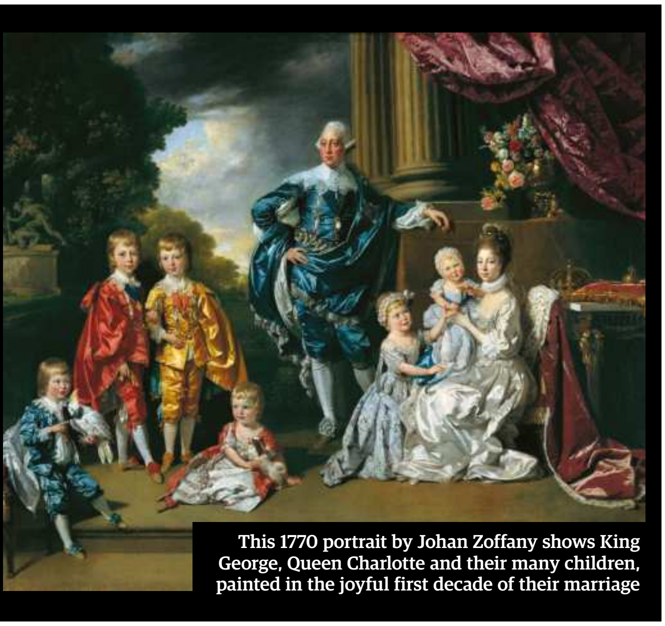
> "For the king, ending the conflict and making concessions to the Americans was never really an option"

The king's domestic bliss?

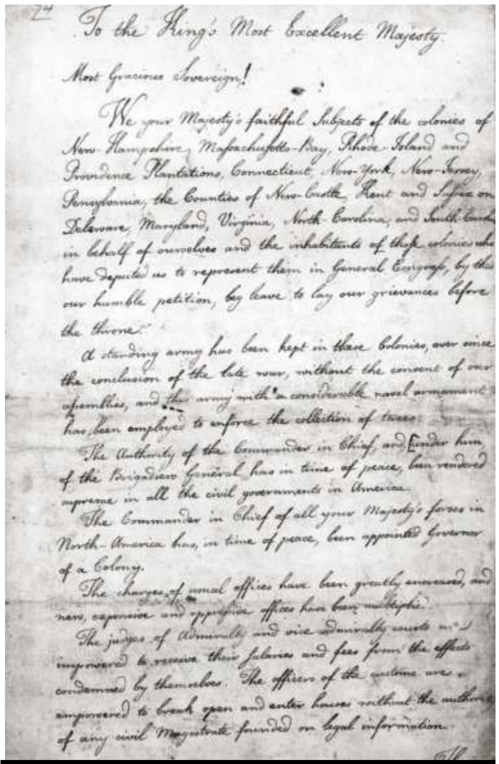
Behind the closed doors of his palace, George was a deeply devout monarch, living by a strict moral code. He took his position as king very seriously and lamented the excesses of his younger brother and sons, who spent most of their time partying and making unsuitable matches. He felt so ashamed of his brother's marriage to a widowed commoner that he passed the Royal Marriages Act 1772, which meant descendants of George II had to ask the monarch's permission before marrying.

George's own marriage, although arranged purely to keep the dynasty going, turned out to be a very happy one. He and Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz had 15 children together and unlike most other monarchs, he remained faithful to her in their 50-year marriage. She shared his love of music, and together they were patrons to some of the greatest artists of the age – such as an eight-year-old Mozart, who they received in 1764.

When the king suffered from bouts of mental instability, his relationship with the queen suffered. She was initially kept in the dark about his problems but when they became impossible to hide, she worried. "What is to become of me?" it is rumoured she said, and she was afraid of seeing the king by herself. However, she continued to support her husband until she died in 1818.



This 1770 portrait by Johan Zoffany shows King George, Queen Charlotte and their many children, painted in the joyful first decade of their marriage



To the King's Most Excellent Majesty

Most Gracious Sovereign!

We your Majesty's faithful Subjects of the colonies of
New-Hampshire, Maſsachuſetts-Bay, Rhode-Island and
Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey,
Pensylvania, the Counties of New-Castle, Kent and Suſsex on
Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North-Carolina, and South-Caro
in behalf of ourselves and the inhabitants of thoſe colonies wh
have deputed us to represent them in General Congreſs, by this
our humble petition, beg leave to lay our grievances before
the throne.

A standing army has been kept in these Colonies, ever since
the conclusion of the late war, without the consent of our
aſsemblies; and this army with a considerable naval armament
has been employed to enforce the collection of taxes.

The Authority of the Commander in Chief, and [under him
of the Brigadiers General has in time of peace, been rendered
supreme in all the civil governments in America.

The Commander in Chief of all your Majesty's forces in
North-America has, in time of peace, been appointed Governor
of a Colony.

The charges of usual offices have been greatly encreased, and
new, expensive and oppreſsive offices have been multiplied.

The judges of Admiralty and vice admiralty courts are
impowered to receive their salaries and fees from the effects
condemned by themselves. The officers of the customs are
empowered to break open and enter houses without the author
of any civil Magistrate founded on legal information.

The first page of the Olive Branch Petition, which addressed George III as the "Most Gracious Sovereign"

However, for the king, ending the conflict and making concessions to the Americans was never really an option. He pushed the war even further, refusing to allow parliament to make peace because he feared that if American rebels were seen to succeed, other British colonies would take heed and rebel against their occupiers.

In particular, he was referring to Ireland. As a devout Anglican, George was hugely resistant to allowing Roman Catholics equal rights under the law and implored his ministers to continue the war for fear of Irish rebellion. He also reasoned – incorrectly – that as France had been aiding the Americans more than their financial situation allowed, the French would soon crumble along with the American resistance.

George was proved wrong and could no longer fight his ministers on the issue. In 1783, the American rebels, British forces and international parties to the war convened in Paris for a symbolic peace conference. America's independence was confirmed, so Britain had lost one of its most valued colonies. The borders that were drawn up were far more generous than even the revolutionaries had expected, which was a source of extra humiliation for Britain. Plus, Florida was given back to Spain, and Britain had to forfeit all its military possessions in the US.

With such a poor settlement, the British public felt a large degree of animosity towards their king, who felt his insistence on prolonging the war had led Britain to disaster. Once again, George III drafted an abdication speech, but he ultimately felt too tied into his duty to resign. He fell into a spell of melancholy and the government was on the verge of collapse yet again.

Luckily for the isolated king, hope was on the horizon. It came in the form of William Pitt the Younger, the elder Pitt's son. Becoming prime minister at the tender age of 24 in 1783, he was Britain's youngest elected leader, and his uneasy alliance with the monarch helped Britain get back on its feet. Pitt was seen as being uncorrupt owing to his youth and inexperience – unlike most of the British establishment at the time, which was rife with financial and political dodgy dealings.

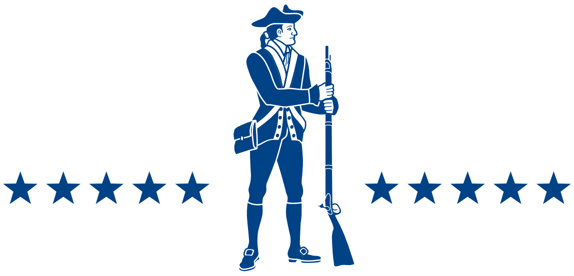
As the young man was so popular, George III was able to ride the coattails of his success. In a wise move, the king now opted to leave decision-making powers to the prime minister, inadvertently laying the foundations for the constitutional monarchy that the UK has today.

The loss of the Thirteen Colonies haunted George, but he now began to re-evaluate the situation. In a letter dating from the 1780s, he displays his immense frustration; "America is lost!" he exclaims. However, it later becomes apparent that he sees American independence as a business opportunity for the mother country. "It is to be hoped that we shall reap more from their trade as friends than ever we could derive from them as colonies", the king believed. He even disclosed his quiet optimism to the United States' first ambassador to Britain, John Adams, telling him that Britain "desired to meet the friendship of the US as an independent power".

Ultimately, George saw his hopes fulfilled, although the relationship between the two nations was somewhat tense at first. The king, meanwhile, drifted off into private retirement. His long reign and the controversies that accompanied it had nearly destroyed his mental health, and he was only too happy to play a minor role in his later years. He died in 1820 having ruled Britain for nearly 60 years. He remains Britain's longest-reigning king, although Queens Victoria and Elizabeth II were both on the throne longer.

Traditionally, owing to his lack of affinity for governance and mental health troubles, George III has been portrayed as a childish despot unwilling to surrender what was already lost. But historians in the 20th century started to take an alternative view of the monarch – that he actually delegated much of his power to parliament, and moreover, that placing George III at the heart of the revolution is an overly personal view of history. After all, one man could not possibly have been responsible for all of the colonists' grievances.

While George remains the butt of the joke in popular culture surrounding the Revolution – for instance in the 2016 musical *Hamilton*, he is a bumbling character that sings desperately to the colonies, "You'll be back!" – he was evidently a far more complex character than has largely been assumed. Deliberately or not, George III's actions while on the throne helped the USA and Britain to become the democracies they are today.



Benjamin Franklin

The American Renaissance man lived a full life before he even became a revolutionary

While we call the leaders of the American Revolution 'Founding Fathers', don't let those powered wigs fool you. Marquis de Lafayette and James Monroe were both only 18 years old on 4 July 1776, the day independence was declared. Alexander Hamilton was 21, James Madison was 25 and Thomas Jefferson, 33. John Adams, George Washington and Samuel Adams were 40, 44 and 53, respectively. 70-year-old Benjamin Franklin was the eldest by a wide margin. Franklin was a full two generations removed from Madison and Hamilton, but he lived a full life that could easily accommodate two more people. Self-made media tycoon, pioneering scientist, globe-trotting statesman; Franklin was all this and more, making him one of the most fascinating figures of the American Revolution.

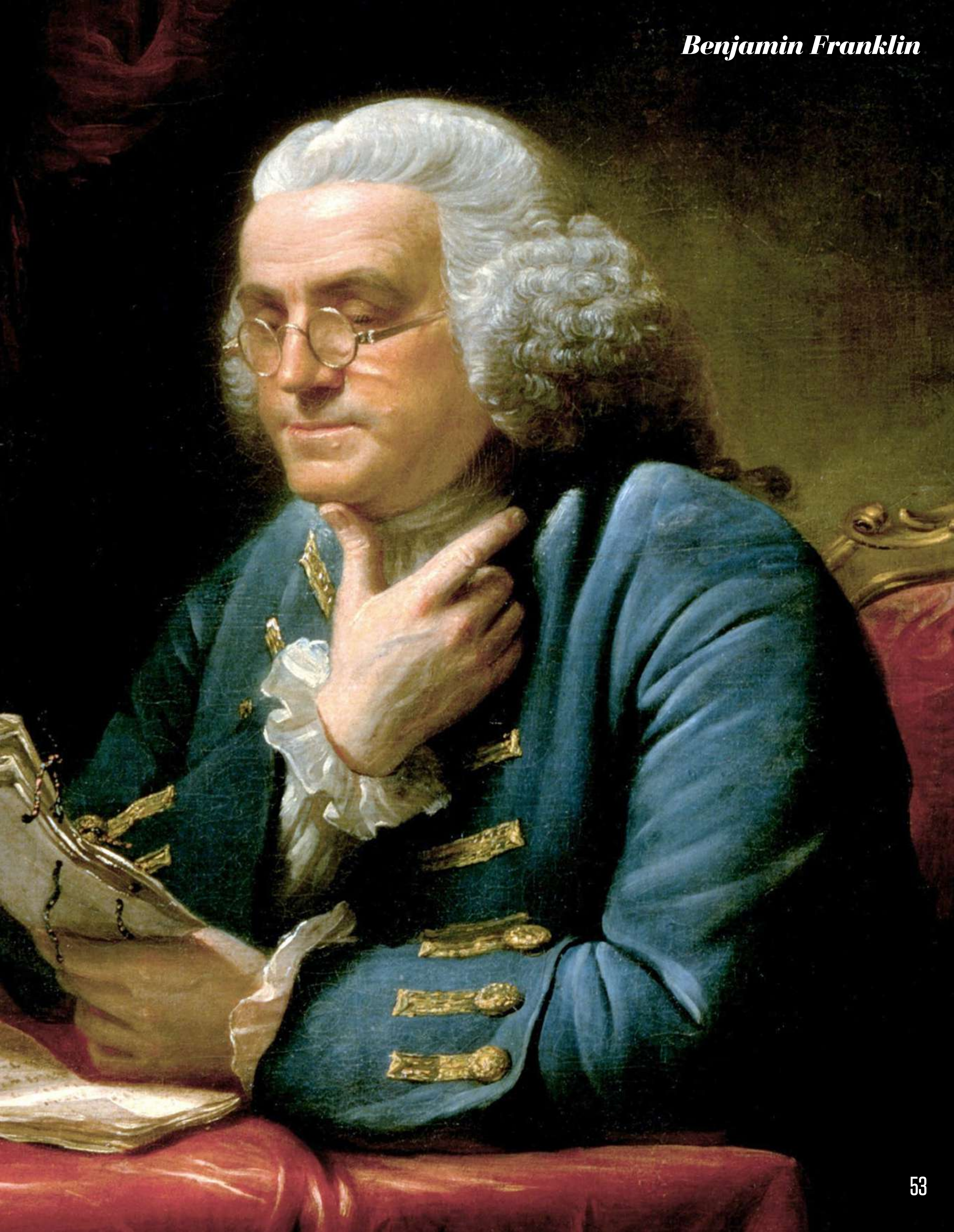
Franklin made eight voyages across the Atlantic Ocean and was the first to map the Gulf Stream

Benjamin Franklin was born on 17 January 1706 in colonial Boston. While he learnt to read at an early age, Franklin's formal education was limited and ended when he was ten. He worked with his chandler father making candles and soap, before becoming an indentured apprentice to his brother James, a printer. What little money he earned during this time was spent on books, which he fervently devoured, and he taught himself to write effectively. In 1722, the brothers quarrelled and Franklin ran away. He enjoyed adventures in New York City and London, but made his home in Philadelphia.

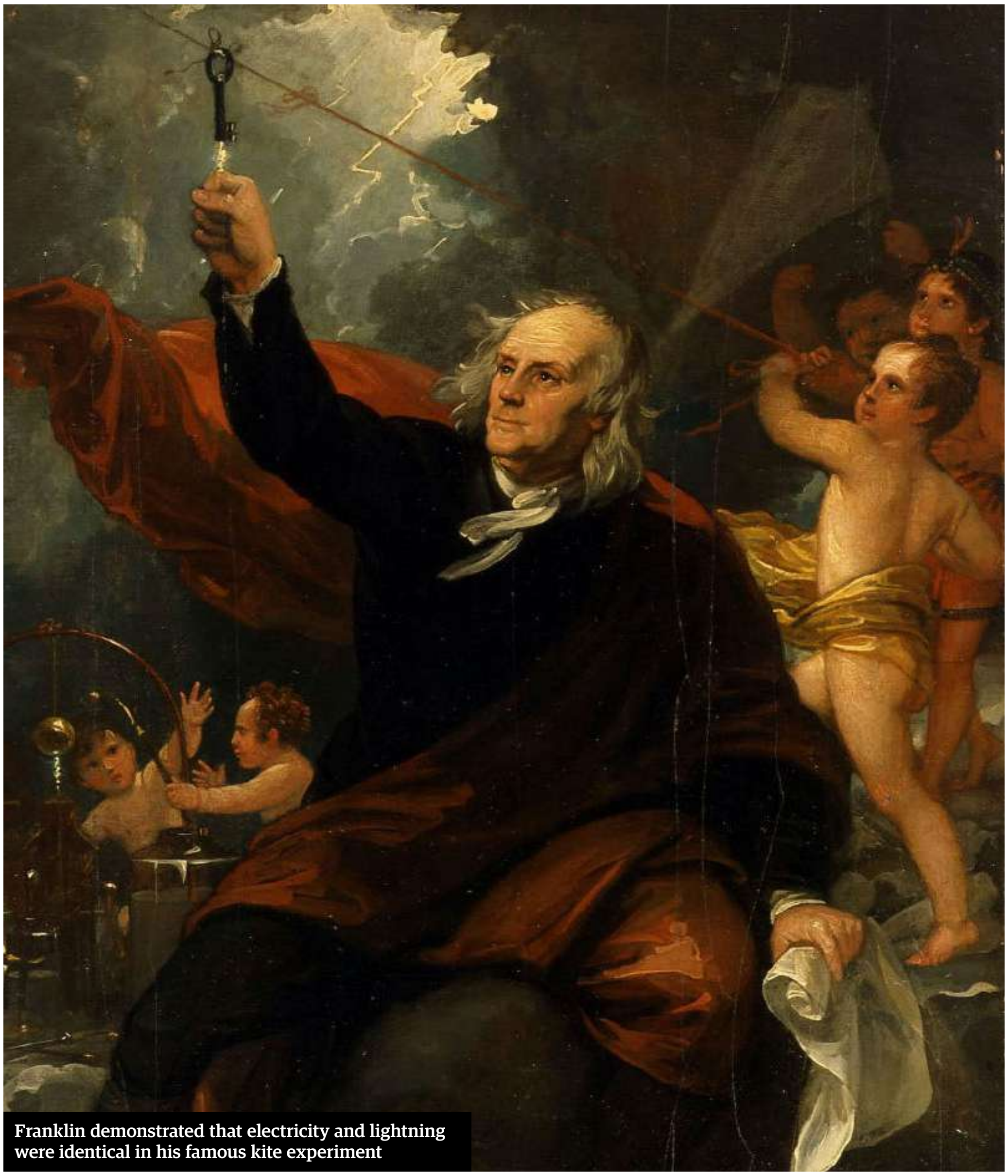
In 1728, aged 20, he set up a printers in partnership with a friend, Hugh Meredith. They landed the contract to produce Pennsylvania's paper currency, so were soon literally printing money. Their next moneymaking venture was to buy a newspaper, which they renamed *The Pennsylvania Gazette*. While it principally ran classified ads - such as employment notices and items for sales - Franklin often contributed editorial under various aliases. From 1732 to 1757, Franklin also produced *Poor Richard's Almanack*, which sold very well for a pamphlet published in the American colonies, with print runs reaching 10,000 a year.

While not every project was a success, Franklin prospered. He bought out Meredith to become

Franklin was a polymath, who enjoyed successful careers in printing, science and politics



Benjamin Franklin



Franklin demonstrated that electricity and lightning were identical in his famous kite experiment

sole owner, and made enough to lend money with interest and to invest in rental properties, both in Philadelphia and many coastal towns.

During this time, Franklin's private life was extremely complicated. He courted Deborah Read when he first arrived penniless in Philadelphia in 1723 and even proposed to her – only to break it off before he went to London. Instead, Deborah married another, who ran up debts before abandoning her. In the meantime, Franklin had an illegitimate son, William, with an unknown woman. Franklin and Deborah ultimately 'revived' their relationship, but Pennsylvania's stringent divorce law meant they could not marry. Instead, on 1 September 1730, the couple held a ceremony for friends and family declaring that they would live as man and wife. In addition to raising William, they had two children of their own: Francis in 1732, who died aged four of smallpox, and Sarah, better known as 'Sally', in 1743.

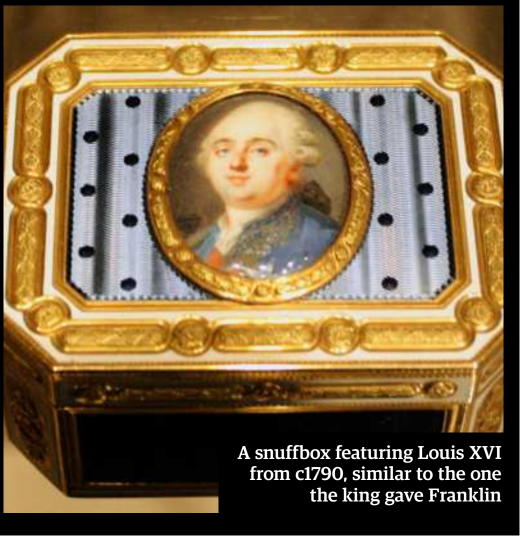
By 1748, Franklin had expanded his printing business throughout the colonies, with partnerships and franchises as far afield as New York, the Carolinas and even the West Indies. Though not yet 50 years old, he could afford to retire. Rather than adopt the life of a leisured gentleman, Franklin pursued his interest in science. He famously flew a kite with a metal house key attached to it in a thunderstorm in June 1752, assisted by his son William. However, contrary to legend, he was not actually struck by lightning – such a blast would have electrocuted him. Instead, the kite picked up the ambient electrical charge from the storm. To dispel another myth, Franklin did not discover electricity. Rather, he demonstrated the connection between lightning and electricity. Franklin was the first to publicise his findings, reporting on them in *The Pennsylvania Gazette*; though with uncharacteristic coyness, he reported the incident third-hand, never revealing that he was the one who conducted the experiment.

Franklin's snuffbox inspired the Emoluments Clause

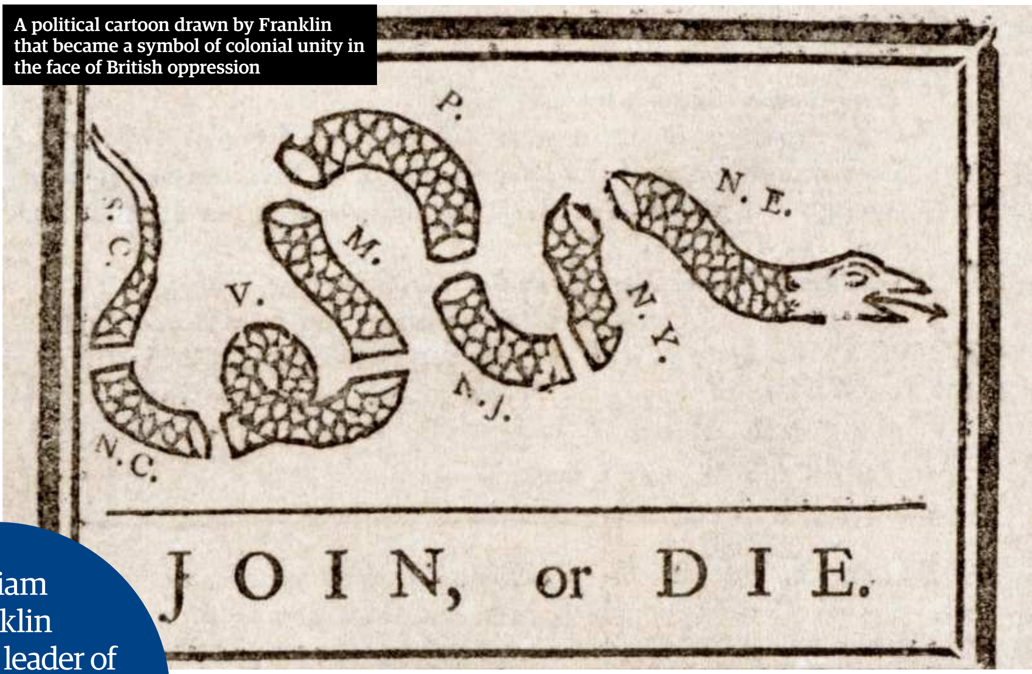
When Franklin was set to leave Paris and return to Philadelphia in 1785, King Louis XVI requested to see him one last time. The king gave the retiring ambassador a token of his appreciation, as was customary in France at the time. But Franklin's gift was more extravagant than most: Louis XVI gave him a gilded snuff box encrusted with over 400 tiny diamonds of "beautiful water," which is to say, the highest quality.

To the egalitarian revolutionaries back home in America, accepting such an elaborate present was a symbol of everything that was wrong with the old, corrupt monarchies of Europe. Many feared that Franklin would now be indebted to the French king and that other rich European powers – including the hated King George III – could also seek to insidiously 'buy' influence in the young republic by bestowing such gifts on other officials. With this in mind, the Articles of Confederation, the precursor to the Constitution, outrightly banned American officials from receiving gifts from foreign powers. Aware of the law but afraid of offending America's greatest ally, Franklin put the dilemma before Congress.

The legislature ultimately approved the gift and Thomas Jefferson personally gave it his blessing, but the episode did not sit well with many Americans. As a result, the framers added Article I, Section 9, Clause 9 – better known as the Emoluments Clause – to the Constitution. This stated that no American officeholder shall "without the consent of the Congress, accept of any present, emolument, office, or title, of any kind whatever, from any king, prince, or foreign state".



A snuffbox featuring Louis XVI from c1790, similar to the one the king gave Franklin



A political cartoon drawn by Franklin that became a symbol of colonial unity in the face of British oppression

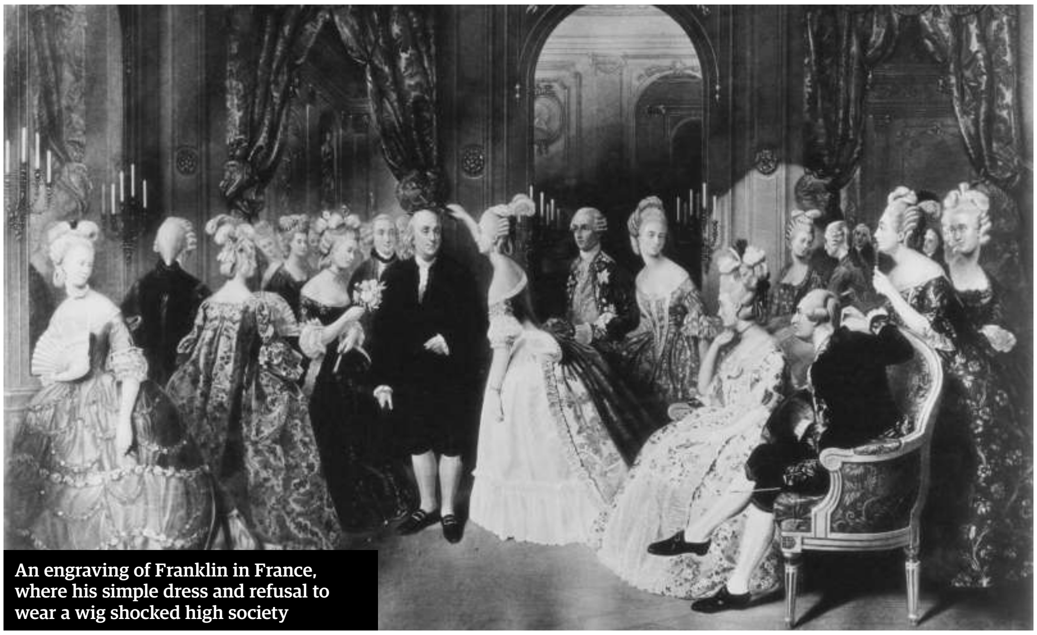
In the course of his lifetime, the inquisitive Franklin also studied ocean currents, meteorology, the causes of the common cold and refrigeration. In addition to the lightning rod, he also invented a stove that provided more heat while using less fuel and bifocal spectacles, which allowed for both distance and reading use. While Franklin had already proved himself a consummate businessman, he didn't patent any of his inventions, believing that knowledge should be shared instead.

With that in mind, he established the Junto, also known as the Leather Apron Club. A debate society where men could gather to discuss natural philosophy, politics and business affairs, it was modelled on the coffee houses Franklin had visited in London. Members included his business partner Meredith, a runaway Oxford student named George Webb, an optician and inventor named Thomas Godfrey, and the future 'surveyor general' of Pennsylvania William Parsons.

Despite the success of his electrical experiments, Franklin never thought science was as important as public service. With the help of his Junto, he built a civic society for the citizens of Philadelphia, innovating new institutions that people around the world take for granted today. This included a fire brigade, a lending library, an insurance company, an academy for children and a hospital. Official titles were quick to follow: Franklin became a member of the Philadelphia City Council in 1748, justice of the peace in 1749 and a city alderman in 1751. In 1753, he gained a royal appointment: deputy postmaster general, in charge of mail in all of the northern colonies.

Perhaps it was this new role or the widespread success of his newspaper that made Franklin start thinking of the colonies as a singular bloc. At the outbreak of the French and Indian War in 1754, Franklin proposed what has become known as the Albany Plan. He called for a union of the colonies to better defend themselves from attack. Showing great foresight for what was to come, Franklin's plan envisioned a president general with limited authority over the loose confederation and the power to levy taxes to be paid into a central treasury. Although the plan was approved by delegates from seven colonies, neither the king's representatives nor the colonial legislatures were ready for such a bold move. While the Albany Plan withered on the vine, it eventually provided the seeds for the Articles of Confederation.

William Franklin became a leader of the loyalist movement, leading to a lifelong rift between father and son



An engraving of Franklin in France, where his simple dress and refusal to wear a wig shocked high society

In 1757, Franklin travelled to England as an agent of the Pennsylvania Assembly. Except for a two-year return to Philadelphia in 1762-64 to check on his post offices, Franklin spent the next 18 years living in London. William, now aged 27, came with him while Deborah and their daughter, 14-year-old Sally, remained behind.

Ostensibly, Franklin was there to meet with the family of William Penn, the proprietors of Pennsylvania, to insist that they pay more taxes to the colonial legislature. Privately, he hoped to persuade the British government to oust the Penn family and give the colonists greater autonomy as a royal province. Instead, he became preoccupied with the problems that arose from the hated Stamp Act of 1765.

Franklin opposed the plan, which required all legal documents, newspapers, posters and even playing cards to carry a tax stamp. But, once he saw that the passage of the tax was inevitable, he accepted defeat and ordered the necessary stamps for his printing firm, while securing his friend John Hughes the stamp agency for Pennsylvania. This turned out to be a disastrous miscalculation: Hughes was almost killed by a mob that fervently resisted the Stamp Tax while Franklin's wife, Deborah, who was alone in Philadelphia, had to rely on protection from friends.

Only Franklin's testimony before parliament denouncing the Stamp Act in 1766 saved his

"He didn't patent his inventions, believing that knowledge should be shared"

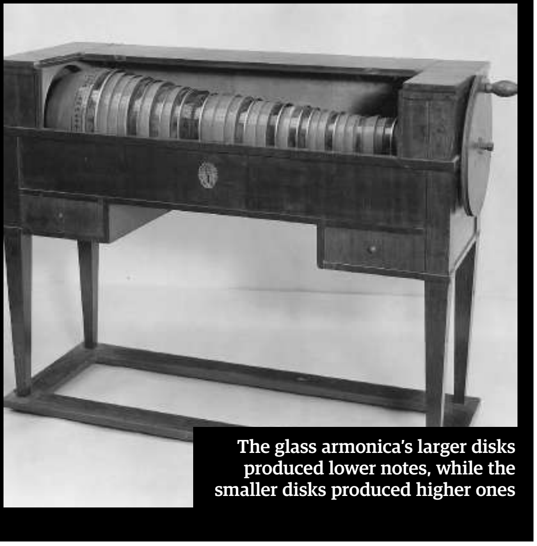
© Getty Images

The ghostly sounds of the glass armonica

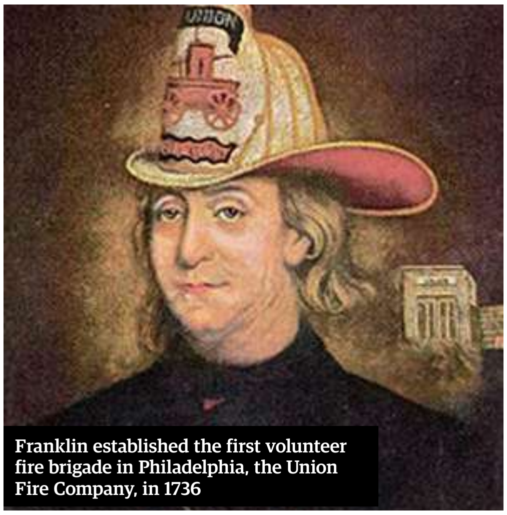
"Of all my inventions, the glass armonica has given me the greatest personal satisfaction." So wrote Franklin about the musical instrument he designed in 1761. The armonica was inspired by an English musician, Edmund Delaval, who Franklin saw perform at Cambridge University. Delaval created sounds by passing his fingers around the brims of glasses filled with water. Franklin worked with a London glassblower to recreate the music ("incomparably sweet beyond those of any other") in a less cumbersome way. His armonica (from the Italian word 'armonia', meaning 'harmony') consisted of 37 bowls mounted horizontally on an iron spindle, which could be turned using a foot pedal.

The likes of Mozart and Beethoven penned music for the armonica, while the hypnosis pioneer Franz Mesmer used the instrument to guide his patients into deep trances. At the time of Franklin's death in 1790, more than 5,000 armonicas had been built, with many appearing in concert halls across Europe and America.

Enthusiasm for the glass armonica eventually waned. Some people claimed the high-pitched, ethereal tones – which Deborah Franklin called "the music of the angels" – invoked the spirits of the dead, while others said lead paint from the instrument's crystal bowls drove the players mad. After an incident in Germany where a child died during a performance, the armonica was actually banned in a few towns. However, it was more likely the instrument's fragile design and thin sound that struggled to fill large halls that made it unpopular with gigging musicians.



The glass armonica's larger disks produced lower notes, while the smaller disks produced higher ones



Franklin established the first volunteer fire brigade in Philadelphia, the Union Fire Company, in 1736

reputation in America. However, he remained supportive of Britain and its control of the colonies. He wrote to Hughes: "A firm Loyalty to the Crown and faithful Adherence to the Government of this Nation [...] will always be the wisest Course for you and I to take, whatever may be the Madness of the Populace or their blind Leaders."

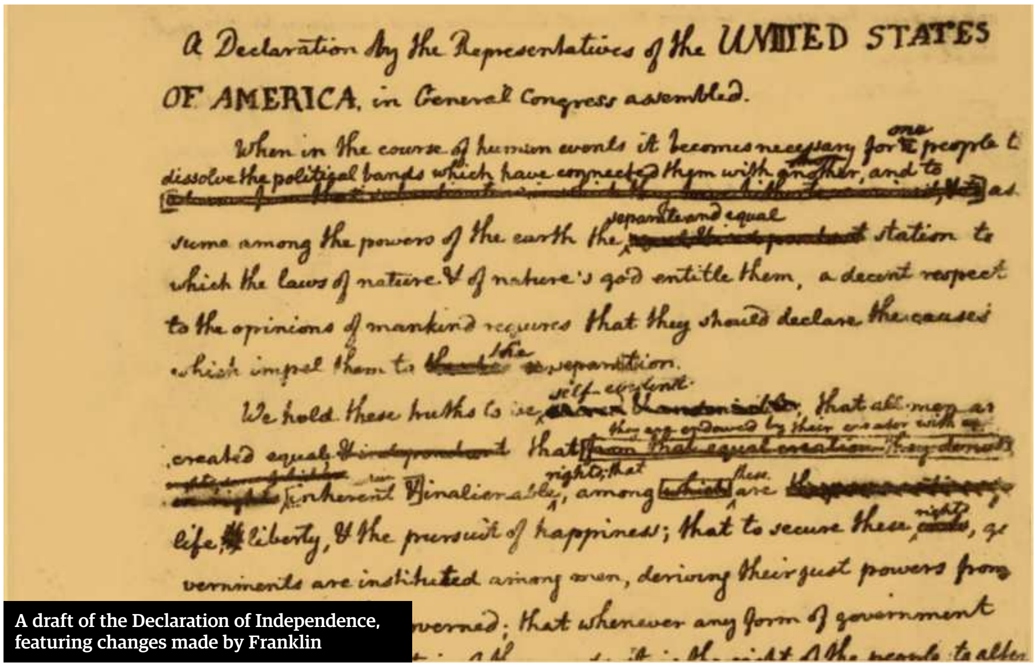
It's perhaps surprising then that in 1773, Franklin became America's first whistleblower. He sent Thomas Cushing, the speaker of the Massachusetts Assembly, a series of letters in which the Massachusetts Governor, Thomas Hutchinson, recommended an 'abridgement' of liberties – including the use of British troops as police – to curb the increasingly violent protest movement. Rather than a revolutionary act, Franklin did it out of a naive belief that exposing the letters would push blame for the growing political crisis back on colonial officials rather than the British government, de-escalating the rising tension between Britain and the colonists. Instead, after the *Boston Gazette* published the letters in June, protests broke out in the city and spread along the Eastern seaboard.

> Though he only went to school for two years, in his lifetime Franklin received honorary degrees from Harvard, Yale, Oxford and more

Franklin found himself dragged before the King's Privy Council in January 1774, publicly berated, accused of stealing the letters and betraying the country. He was fired as the Colonial Deputy Postmaster two days later. Franklin stayed on in London until March 1775, involved in a futile attempt at reconciling the two sides, before setting sail for America.

In the course of Franklin's voyage home, his homeland was transformed. Minutemen clashed with redcoats at Lexington and Concord and the American Revolution had begun. When Franklin reached Philadelphia in May 1775, the Second Continental Congress was gathering in the city to debate the insurgent colonies' next move. Franklin was immediately elected to represent Pennsylvania state once again.

When exactly Franklin embraced independence – and on which side of the Atlantic crossing – is debated, but by early July, Franklin was one of the most ardent opponents of Britain in the Continental Congress. Despite being 70 years old, he threw himself into the work of building a new country from scratch. He served on a variety



A Declaration by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled.

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for ~~a~~ one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to ~~[illegible]~~ assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal ~~equal & independent~~ station to which the laws of nature & of nature's god entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to ~~the change~~ the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident ~~sacred & undeniable~~; that all men are created equal ~~& independent~~; that they are endowed by their creator with ~~equal~~ rights ~~from that equal creation they derive~~ ~~rights~~ inherent & inalienable, among ~~which~~ these are ~~the preservation of~~ life, ~~&~~ liberty, & the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, ~~ends~~, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from

verned; that whenever any form of government

A draft of the Declaration of Independence, featuring changes made by Franklin of congressional committees, helping to establish a new paper currency, defined rules for the Continental Army to follow, and developed a new postal system.

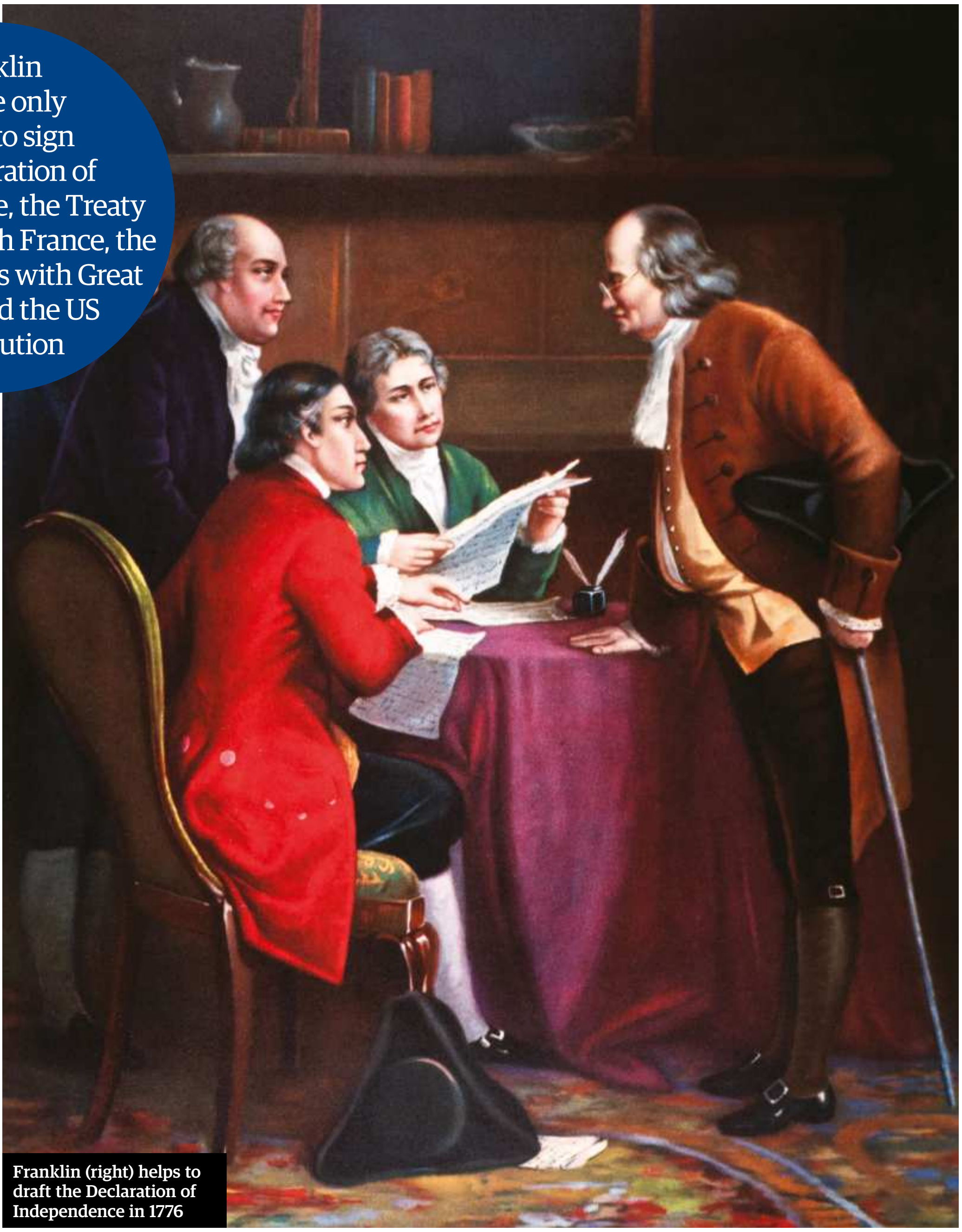
Most significantly of all, Franklin was part of the Committee of Five tasked with co-authoring the Declaration of Independence. Although Thomas Jefferson wrote the vast majority of the document, the old newspaperman put his editor's hat back on, proofreading Jefferson's text and tweaking the wording. It's thought it was Franklin who drew a thick black line through Jefferson's phrase (still visible on the 'rough draft' held by the Library of Congress) that said: "We hold these truths to be sacred and undeniable." Franklin changed this to the words that are now enshrined in history: "We hold these truths to be self-evident."

Franklin was the only person to sign the Declaration of Independence, the Treaty of Alliance with France, the Treaty of Paris with Great Britain and the US Constitution

No sooner was the Declaration of Independence signed, Franklin was sent to Paris to seek military aid from France. The Continental Congress could not have chosen a better representative. Playing on the French aristocracy's romanticised view of the American frontiersman, he arrived at King Louis XVI's royal court wearing a homespun brown suit and fur hat. While defying the stiff protocol of Europe's most formal court was a gamble, it paid off: Franklin became an overnight celebrity. Frenchmen sympathetic to the American cause donned fur caps, while ladies had their wigs styled in a look known as 'coiffures a là Franklin'.

Franklin also knew that real diplomacy in France wasn't accomplished around the negotiating table, but the dinner table. No doubt drawing on his experiences with the Junto, he spent a great deal of time in the salons and at dinner parties. In this way, he won the trust and respect of the French court. In 1778, he secured an alliance with France, which saw them commit supplies, volunteer fighters and a fleet that helped win the Revolutionary War. Franklin also managed to secure loan after loan for the new republic from France's increasingly impoverished government.

But not everyone agreed with Franklin's methods. In 1783, while he was part of Franklin's negotiating team tasked with making peace with Great Britain from Paris, John Adams complained that Franklin enjoyed himself while he and John Jay did all the work. However, it was Franklin who successfully mollified Louis XVI when Adams and Jay jeopardised French support. The problem arose from the fact that France wanted a three-way treaty that would end their war with Britain, as well as between Britain and the 13 Colonies. Months passed and various offers and counter-offers were made by the former colonies and Great Britain.



Franklin (right) helps to draft the Declaration of Independence in 1776

Meanwhile, France was negotiating settlements with Great Britain that involved portions of the North American continent. Frustrated with how long the process was taking, Adams and Jay decided to negotiate a treaty directly with Britain. The British made them an incredible offer, one that gave the Americans almost everything they demanded; even Franklin had to concede it was the best deal they could get. But the French were offended that the Americans had gone behind their backs. Franklin had to use all his diplomatic skills to convince the chief minister that Adams and Jay had acted out of lack of propriety, not hostility.

Franklin stayed in France until 1785, when he reluctantly returned to America. Leaving the many friends he'd made behind, he feared he would be a "stranger in my own country" after so many years abroad. His fears proved correct as he found himself politically marginalised. Though he owned two slaves for many years, before he died in 1790, Franklin signed a statement calling for the abolishment of slavery, which Congress rejected. After his death, the House of Representatives voted to declare a month of mourning for him, but the Senate rejected that as well, possibly because he wrote a scathing response to the failure of his anti-slavery petition. However, down the decades, Franklin has been widely accepted as one of the United States' most famous figures and come to embody the American ideal of the self-made man.

"Even Franklin had to concede it was the best deal they could get"

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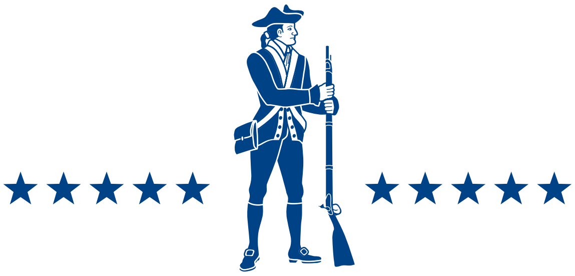


Samuel Adams

Founding Father, revolutionary, troublemaker... Samuel Adams made a name for himself as all of these things and more

Samuel Adams' skills as a businessman and brewer would never have distinguished him as an exceptional man, but in 18th-century America he found his true calling. As a passionate advocate for and defender of American liberty, he was second-to-none as a political organiser, agitator, propagandist and rabble-rouser. His importance in popularising the ideas that led directly to the American Revolution simply can't be overstated.

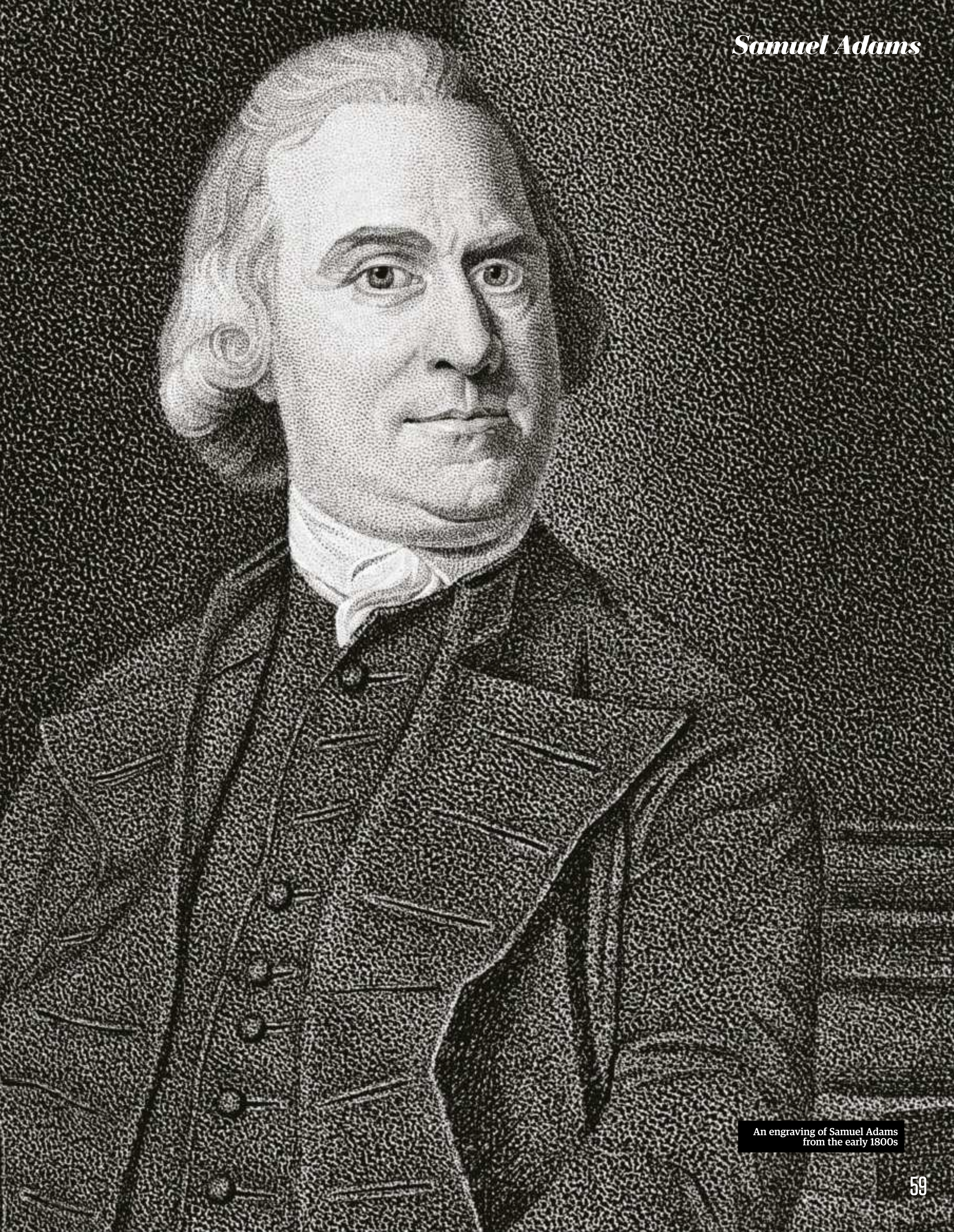
Adams was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on 27 September 1722. He was one of 12 children of devout puritans Samuel and Mary Adams (fellow future Founding Father John Adams was his second cousin), but sadly one of only three to live past infancy. Samuel Sr was a church deacon, successful merchant and a respected local politician, eventually rising to the Massachusetts House of Representatives. Politically, Deacon Adams was a staunch protector of the colonial rights laid out in the Massachusetts Charter of 1691, and a resistor of any attempted erosion of those rights by the British Crown.

The seeds of Samuel Jr's future activism were sown early in his life. His parents hoped his education, first at Boston Latin School and then at Harvard University, would prepare him for a career in the church, but he was soon swayed by politics. His Harvard thesis addressed the question of "whether it be lawful to resist the Supreme Magistrate if the commonwealth cannot otherwise be preserved", and answered in the affirmative.

The British parliament's damaging interference in a banking dispute that almost ruined Deacon Adams was an important early lesson to the young Samuel about the limits of America's freedom to legislate its own affairs. Early attempts both at holding down jobs working for others and at going into business for himself were failures, usually attributed to his mind being elsewhere. He was far too distracted by politics to hold down a career at anything else. His father eventually made him a partner in the family's malt house, which processed the malt necessary for brewing beer, and Adams began writing impassioned libertarian political essays in his spare time, publishing them in *The Independent Advertiser*, a weekly newspaper that he himself helped found. He was elected as a clerk of the Boston Market in 1747, and as a tax collector in 1756. He was popular in the latter role for being exceptionally lenient to people in tax arrears.

Issues of taxation would be key to his subsequent rise as a public figure. Britain, while emerging victorious, had financially almost crippled itself during the French-Indian War and the wider Seven Years' War, and its solution to raise revenue was the imposition of a slew of new taxes on the American colonies. Adams organised. He sought and gained new converts to his political ideals from all walks of life, gaining a reputation for being able to impart complex ideas in a way that anyone could understand. He made important connections, such as the wealthy smuggler John Hancock, who employed thousands of people in and around Boston. Hancock funded rallies and propaganda campaigns, and named his ship Liberty. Adams' response to the Townshend Acts in 1768 was his famous Massachusetts Circular Letter, co-written with his friend and colleague the lawyer James Otis Jr, protesting the taxes.

"The Acts made [in the British Parliament], imposing duties on the people of this province, with the sole and express purpose of raising a revenue," the letter argued, "are infringements of their natural and constitutional rights; because, as they are not represented in the British Parliament,



An engraving of Samuel Adams from the early 1800s his Majesty's Commons in Britain, by those Acts, grant their property without their consent… Their constituents, considering their local circumstances, cannot, by any possibility, be represented in the Parliament; and that it will forever be impracticable, that they should be equally represented there, and consequently, not at all; being separated by an ocean of 1,000 leagues."

Customs officials in Boston began to find their work increasingly hampered amid the general mood of anti-authority feeling and requested military assistance. British troops occupied Boston, increasing tensions and leading inexorably to the stand-off that resulted in the Boston Massacre in 1770. Adams wrote publicly and frequently excoriating the occupation as being a direct violation of the British Parliament's 1689 Bill of Rights. More than 40 articles by Adams were published by the scurrilous *Boston Gazette* during this period, and syndicated to New York, Philadelphia and even England.

There were concerns from Britain and its representatives in the colonies that an independence movement was finding its feet – especially when Adams and his sympathisers formed committees of correspondence to compare notes on British high-handedness between Massachusetts various towns in 1772. Before long, similar committees were springing up in other states as well.

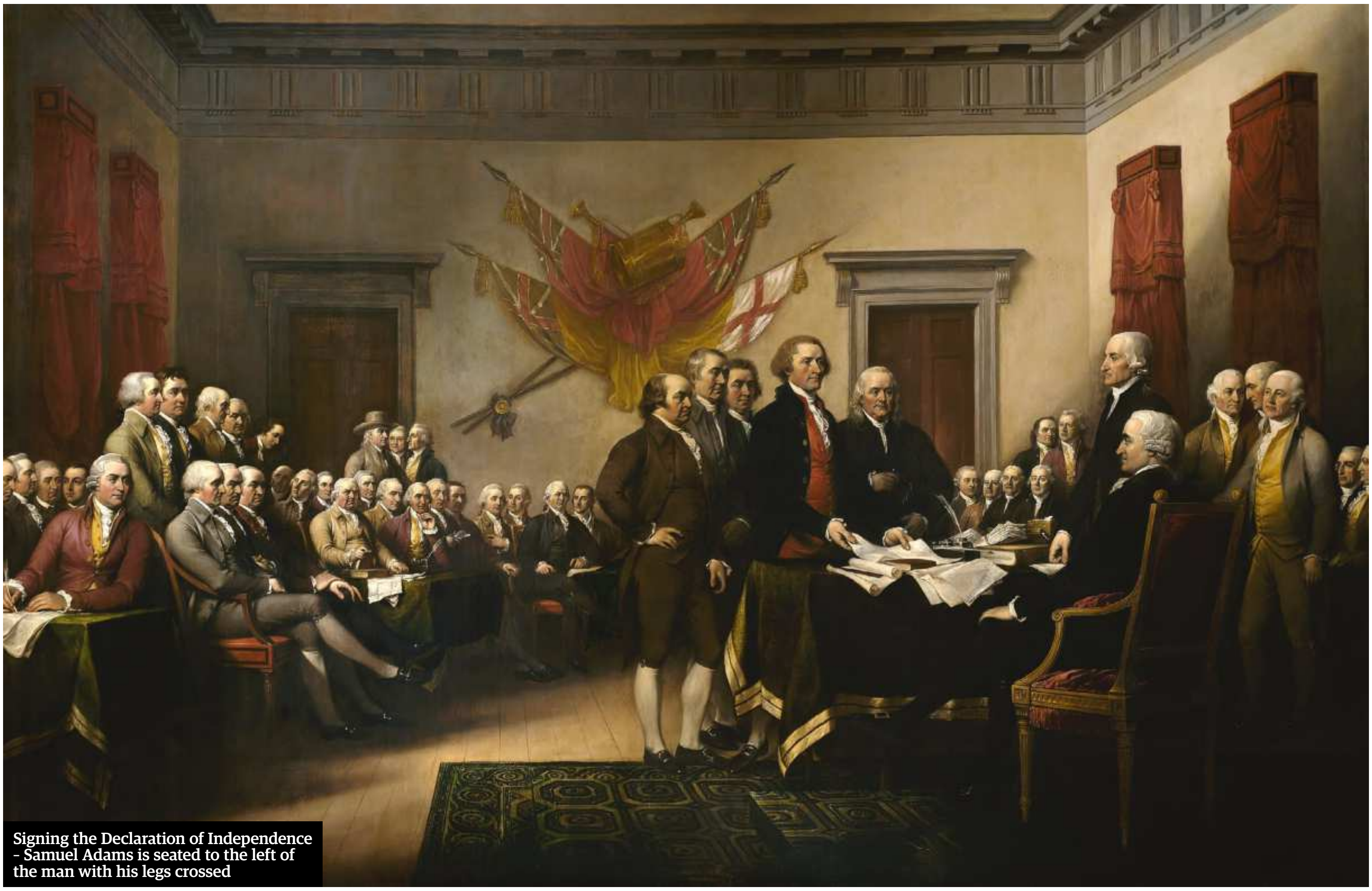
"Before long, similar committees were springing up in other states as well"

Following the events of the Boston Tea Party in 1773, the British Parliament imposed the Coercive or 'Intolerable' Acts, to which Adams coordinated resistance in short order. Heading a committee in the Massachusetts legislature – at which the doors were locked to prevent entry and interference by the commander of British military forces in North America, General Thomas Gage – Adams proposed what would subsequently become the First Continental Congress, attended by representatives of 12 of the 13 states, and held in Philadelphia between September and October 1774.

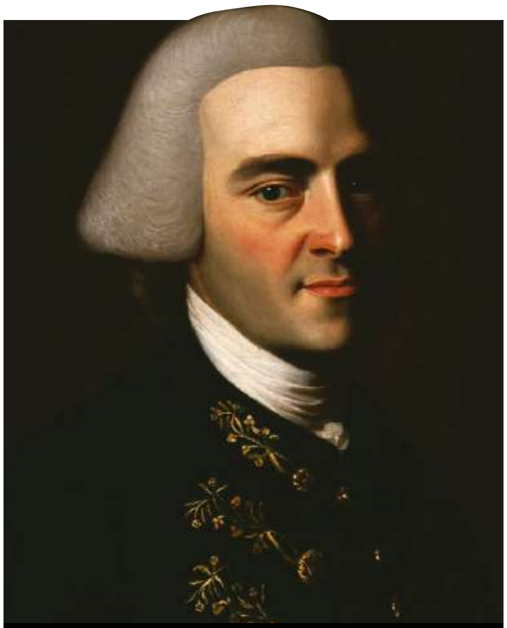
It was the first time Adams had been outside Massachusetts. The Congress asserted that the British Parliament had no authority over matters of internal American politics, and petitioned the British king George III to redress the growing list of American grievances. They agreed to reconvene in May 1775 should their appeal be unsuccessful, but events overtook them. By April, the American Revolutionary War was underway.

Adams and Hancock were both at Lexington on 19 April, managing to escape as the battle between British and Colonial troops began. Their subsequent singling out by the British as being among "the principal actors and abettors… of treason and rebellion" only enhanced their reputation among those they wished to inspire. Adams was also at the Second Continental Congress in May, where he seconded his cousin John's nomination of George Washington as the new colonial army's commander-in-chief.

Adams was a signatory on the Declaration of Independence in July 1776, and served on copious military committees to successfully coordinate the United States' war effort. He represented Massachusetts on the committee that drafted the revolutionary Articles of Confederation, which served as a placeholder US Constitution during the war. And with those Articles advocating separate government for each state, he was part of the three-man drafting committee (with John Adams and James Bowdoin) that wrote the original Massachusetts Constitution in 1779. The document



Signing the Declaration of Independence – Samuel Adams is seated to the left of the man with his legs crossed


John Hancock, an important early ally of Samuel Adams, painted by John Singleton Copley in 1770

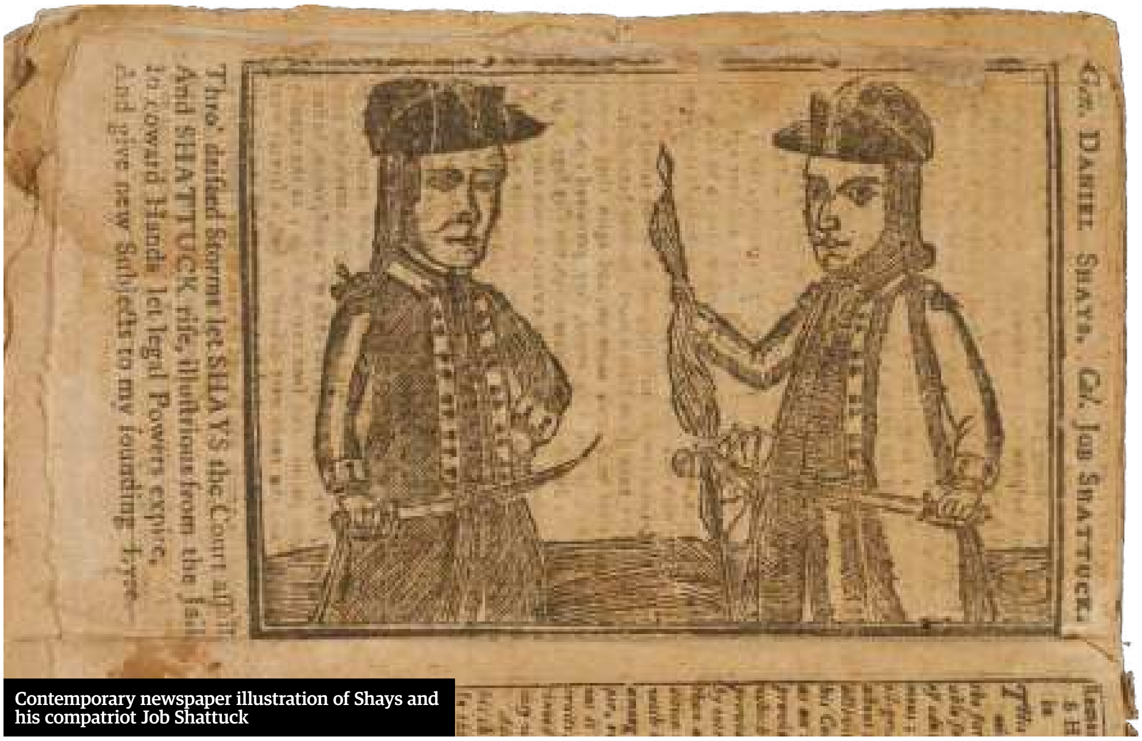
featured Adams' firm contention that "a state is never free except when each citizen is bound by no law whatever that he has not approved of, either directly, or through his representatives".

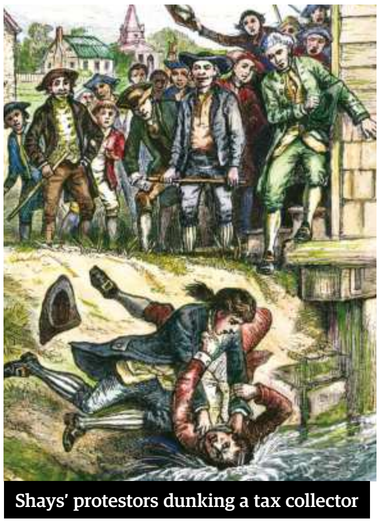
Adams retired from the Continental Congress in 1781 due to failing health but remained politically active back at home in Massachusetts. With the war reaching its conclusion – in favour of American independence – in 1782, there was still much organising to be done. The so-called Shays' Rebellion of 1786 demonstrated that the Articles of Confederation were no longer sufficient as the United States' peacetime constitution, leading to the drafting of a new Constitution at the Philadelphia Convention in 1787. Adams did not attend but he was part of the Massachusetts Ratifying Convention, which met in January 1788. No longer the firebrand he once was, he listened carefully to the debates but spoke rarely. Nevertheless, he only agreed to lend his support and signature to the new Constitution with the proviso that further amendments would be forthcoming.

An anti-Federalist opposed to a monolithic central government, he was insistent that there should be an additional Bill of Rights enshrining the power of America's individual states and its citizenry. Those ten amendments arrived in 1791. Adams was elected governor of Massachusetts in 1794, and he continued to espouse Republican ideals and oppose Federalism. He declined to seek re-election at the end of his term and retired from politics in 1797. He died on 2 October 1803, aged 81.

In the years since his death, Samuel Adams' reputation has fluctuated. An 1865 biographer painted him as a great man, albeit one who "stooped now and then to a piece of sharp practice". But following the events of the Civil War, when the word 'rebellion' took on less heroic connotations, his name suffered, to the extent that a 1958 book of Harvard graduates listed him as "a preacher of hate without rival".

Depending on what you read, he was either a political hero fighting for American freedom, or a Boston dictator and insidious riler-upper of the mob. The truth is somewhere in between and one lifelong supporter was his cousin, who, as America's second president, ended up eclipsing Samuel as a Founding Father. "You say [Samuel] 'had too much sternness and pious bigotry,'" John Adams upbraided one critic. "A man in his situation and circumstances must possess a large fund of sternness of stuff, or he soon will be annihilated."


Gen. DANIEL SHAYS. Col. JOB SHATTUCK.
Thro' drifted Storms let SHAYS the Court
And SHATTUCK rise, illustrious from the
In coward Hands let legal Powers expire,
And give new Subjects to my founding fire.
Contemporary newspaper illustration of Shays and his compatriot Job Shattuck


Shays' protestors dunking a tax collector

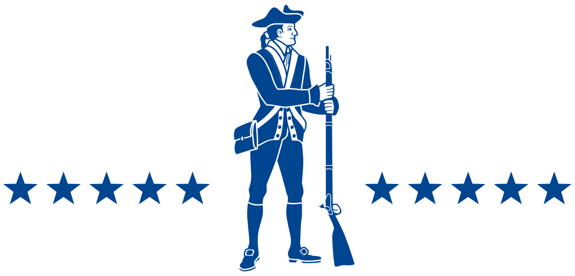
Shays' Rebellion

Not all rebellions found favour with Samuel Adams

Between August 1786 and the following June, veteran of the Revolutionary War Daniel Shays led 4,000 Massachusetts agricultural labourers in an uprising in protest at their financial plight. Poor harvests, economic depression, high taxes and their treatment at the hands of aloof merchants and local authorities meant that many risked losing their farms and already meagre livelihoods. Shays himself had fought at many of the war's major battles and been wounded in action, but he resigned from the army unpaid in 1780 and had subsequently found himself in court for non-payment of debts. Realising he was far from alone, he swiftly turned to direct action. His protestors shut down courts and marched on the United States Armoury at Springfield in an attempt to seize arms and ammunition and overthrow the government.

General Benjamin Lincoln's forces managed to quell the rebellion without much trouble and the rebels were mostly pardoned under a general amnesty. But the rebellion played into the hands of Federalists who were arguing for stronger central government and a new Constitution to support it, on the grounds that "ordinary" citizens were too volatile to successfully govern themselves.

Samuel Adams, in a move that surprised many, condemned the rebels, insisting that this wasn't a reversal of his principles. The American Revolution, he argued, had been a just war against an unrepresentative government. Taking up arms against a republican government, however, should be fiercely discouraged, since the system was in place to remedy problems through elections. "The man who dares to rebel against the laws of a republic," he declared, "ought to suffer death!"



John Adams

A Founding Father, a vice president and a president, John Adams was a formidable figure in the early days of the USA

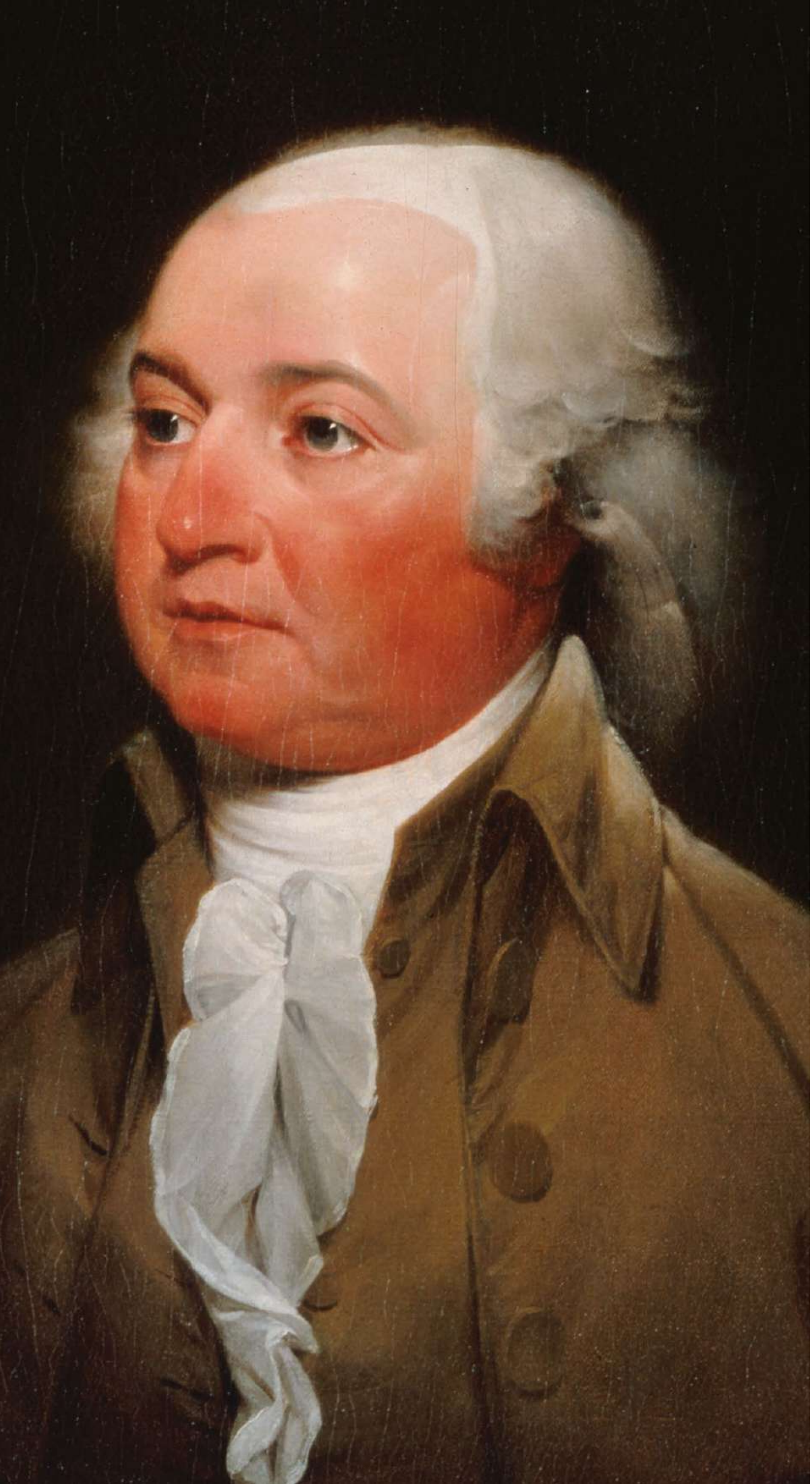
Born in Quincy, Massachusetts on 30 October 1735, John Adams was the eldest of three brothers. The Adams family traced their ancestry back to the first generation of Puritan settlers who came from Wales to land in New England in the early 17th century. Adams' father, Deacon John Adams, a farmer, craftsman and shoemaker, saw education as paramount to his sons' upbringing as John enrolled at a school in nearby Braintree. The drive for education seemingly did the trick, as by the age of 16, John Adams was on his way to a scholarship at the prestigious Harvard University, just like his father before him.

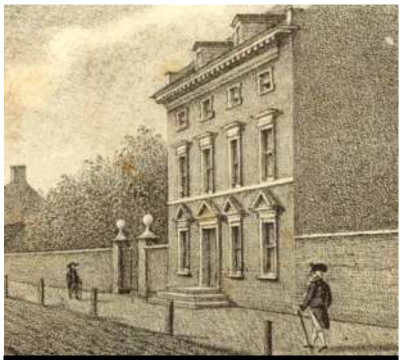
Adams began life at Harvard in 1751 and studied for four years, receiving both an undergraduate and a masters in Law. After graduation, the next few years were spent teaching at a grammar school in Worcester while contemplating what to do with his life. He married his third cousin Abigail Smith and toyed with the idea of joining the government, but eventually decided that the best course of action would be to move to Boston and undertake further studies in the hope of being a lawyer. While living in Boston, Adams became known as an advocate for the patriot cause due to his opposition of the 1765 Stamp Act and the Townshend Acts of 1767 that George III imposed on his empire's colonies in America. The first act ordered that every American colonist had to pay tax on every piece of paper - from legal documents to newspapers - while the second imposed a tariff on glass and tea imported into the colonies. This angered many Americans, with Adams being just one of them. His response was to write articles for the *Boston Gazette*, claiming that the act deprived his people of the right to be taxed by consent. Fast-forward five years, though, and Adams was defending the British soldiers for their role in an event known as the Boston Massacre.

> Adams served on 90 committees in the early days of government, more than any other congressman

By 1774 Adams had seemingly calmed his patriotic views and had knuckled down to concentrate on his law studies. His dedication paid dividends and later that year he was successfully elected to the Massachusetts Assembly. Things got even better when he was chosen as one of the five men to represent the colony at the First Continental Congress on 5 September 1774. Meeting in Philadelphia, men from all colonies except Georgia met to discuss what they saw as 'intolerable acts' from the British government towards their homeland.

The following year the rebellion against British rule stepped up a gear when Congress met for a second time and subsequently established the Continental Army. Adams, now wielding a substantial amount of power, chose George Washington as commander-in-chief of the army as war broke out in 1775. Adams' influence grew further when Congress permitted his idea of each colony taking on an independent government in May 1776. The workaholic Adams was serving on





The President's House in Philadelphia was the official residence of both George Washington and John Adams before the latter moved to the White House in 1800

Life in the time of John Adams

The American Revolution

Eight years of war leads to American independence from Great Britain. An event in which Adams was instrumental, 13 of British America's colonies rebelled against the Crown and the first shot was fired on 19 April 1775 at the battles of Lexington and Concord. Surrender came at Yorktown in October 1781.

The French Revolution

The American version wasn't the only revolution in Adams' life. The movement began in France in the late 18th Century and culminated in the storming of the Bastille in 1789 and the execution of the King Louis XVI in 1792. The First Republic was formed and the rise of Napoleon had begun.

Jacobite Rebellion

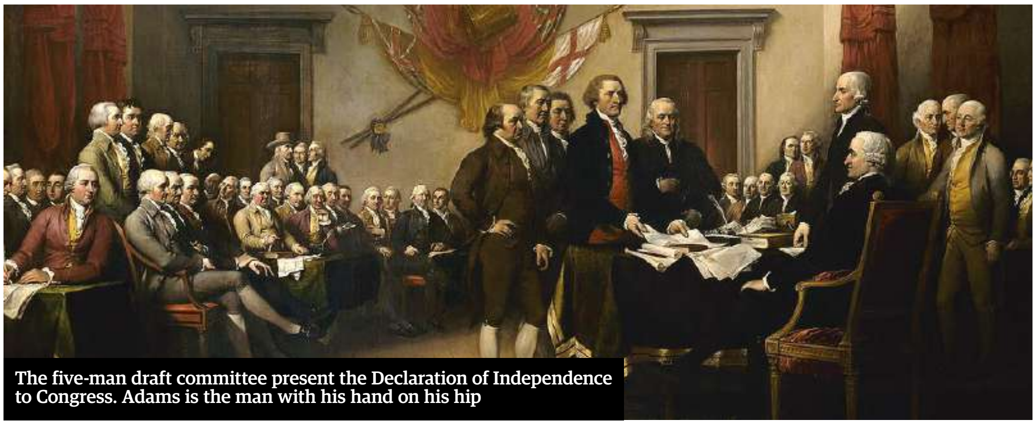
Bonnie Prince Charlie arrives in the Highlands determined to reclaim the British Crown for the exiled House of Stuart. After reaching as far as south as Derby, British divisions are recalled from the continent and the advance loses momentum. The rebellion ends at the Battle of Culloden in April 1746.

The transatlantic slave trade declines

The African slave trade triangle began in the 16th century but by the late 1800s it is declining. The 1791 Haitian Revolution is a large-scale slave uprising and by 1803 Denmark is the first to ban the slave trade. Britain follows suit in 1807.

Samuel Johnson dictionary published

On 15 April 1755 lexicographer Samuel Johnson's Dictionary of the English Language is published. Taking over eight years to compile, it lists 40,000 words, each with detailed definitions. A great scholarly achievement, the French equivalent took 40 scholars 55 years to complete.



The five-man draft committee present the Declaration of Independence to Congress. Adams is the man with his hand on his hip

over 90 committees and wrote the prelude to what would become the Declaration of Independence, and later seconded Richard Henry Lee's resolution of independence. The movement for freedom from the British was underway and Congress appointed Adams to draft what would be the final declaration. He would complete this job with Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Robert R Livingston and Roger Sherman, and it was approved on 4 July.

The fiercely patriotic Adams was given the title of head of the board of war and ordinance in 1777, personally supervising the constant development of the Continental Army. While war was raging, Adams utilised his negotiating skills and managed to persuade the French to ally with the Americans and use their ships against the Royal Navy. Domestically he was busy writing the Massachusetts constitution, which went on to be the template for other states to follow and is now the oldest of its kind in the world. Desiring further alliances with France, Congress sent Adams back to Europe along with his two sons, John Quincy and Charles. Despite being forced to divert to Spain after a leak, and having to make the rest of the journey to Paris by land in mid-winter, he made it to the French capital. Sadly the French ministers only desired to work with Franklin (whose relationship had soured with Adams) and not Adams, as he was too forceful in his approach. Adams also had little luck in negotiations in Amsterdam, but the well-timed American victory at the Battle of Yorktown convinced the Dutch banking houses to secure a loan with the US. As the war continued to turn in the patriots' favour, the French attitude became warmer to a Franco-American alliance. The Peace of Paris in 1783 secured their support and was a triumph of Franklin's diplomacy and Adams' determination. With the war finally over, the men

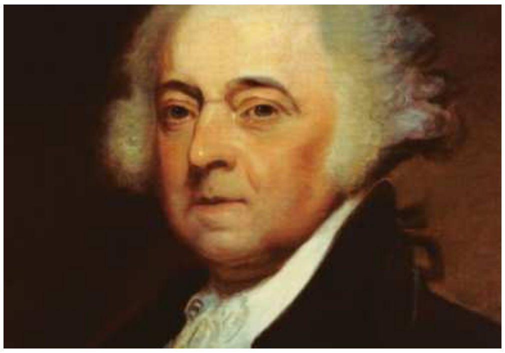
> Adams' final words were "Thomas Jefferson survives." Sadly he didn't know that his old friend had died just hours earlier

Defining moment

Stamp Act crisis

1765

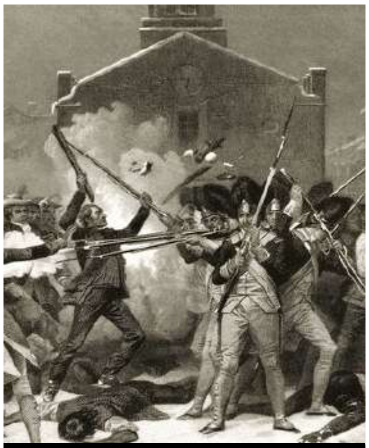
Passed by the British in May, the Stamp Act debatably initiated mainstream political activism in the American colonies. John Adams was just one of the colonists who was appalled at the act and three months later his essay 'A Dissertation on Cannon and Feudal Law' appeared in the *Boston Gazette*. Inspired by the perceived unfairness of the act, Adams argued that it was unconstitutional and his writings influenced, among others, the Sons of Liberty group. Men took to the streets to riot and intimidate tax collectors and Adams was now seen by many not as not just a lawyer, but as an agitator.



The Boston Massacre

Despite its name, this event was more of a street fight. In 1770, patriotism was running through the colonies after further taxation from the British Crown. On the evening of 5 March an argument broke out between British private Hugh White and a group of patriots outside the Custom House in the town of Boston. As the spat escalated, a mob of around 50 colonists berated and then attacked the group of British Redcoats. Throwing sticks and stones, the British soldiers were antagonised and after one was knocked down by a projectile, they began firing. Using their rifles, the soldiers ended up killing three of the Bostonians with another eight were injured (two of which died of their wounds).

A meeting was called to discuss the events and resulted in the angry locals demanding the trial of the soldiers for murder. A trial was called and John Adams, despite being well known as a staunch patriot was chosen as the British lawyer. He defended the British, stating that their lives were potentially in danger, eventually leading to six being found not guilty and two charged with manslaughter. The Boston Massacre only intensified the American distrust of the British and helped sow the seeds of revolution.



Also known as the 'Incident on King Street', the Boston Massacre was a key event in Adams' law career and his started his apparent pro-British stance that would later dog his presidency

Timeline

1735

John Adams born
The future second president of the United States is born to John Adams Sr and Susana Boylston in Massachusetts. He is the eldest of three brothers and has ancestry in Wales, from where his Puritan ancestors emigrated in the 1630s.
1735

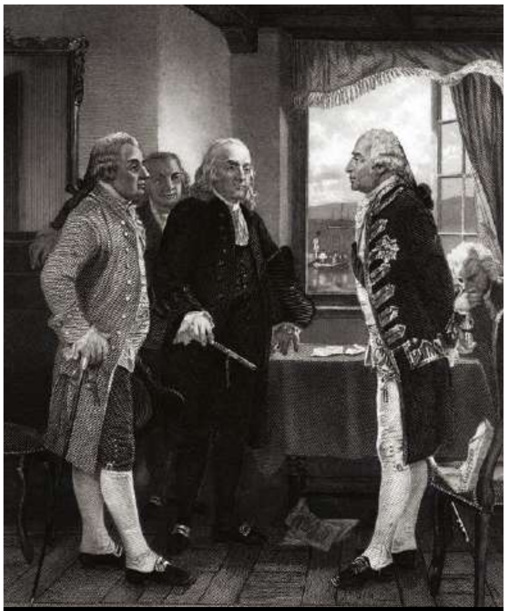
Enrolment at Harvard
Going against his father's wishes for him to enter government, Adams, aged 16, instead gains a scholarship at Harvard to study law. He eventually graduates in 1755 with both a bachelor's degree and a masters.
1751

Early writing career
Always a man who believed in the pen being mightier than the sword, Adams begins his fledgling writing career at local newspapers writing under a false name, honing the skills that would define his later work.
1763

Marriage to Abigail Smith
The following year Adams marries his childhood sweetheart and third cousin, Abigail Smith. They end up having five children and stay together happily married for the rest of their lives.
1764

Boston Massacre
On 5 March, the young lawyer faces his toughest task to date as five colonists are killed by British soldiers a scuffle in the town of Boston. Adams is elected to defend the soldiers, and successfully argues for their acquittal.
1770

Entry to Continental Congress
After a period in the Massachusetts Assembly, Adams represents his colony at the very first Continental Congress in 1774. He is instrumental in the creation of the Continental Army a year later.
1774



Adams is portrayed as more of a political theorist than a politician per se, which hindered his tenure as president

returned to the newly established and independent United States of America.

Back in the New World, Adams found himself as a leading candidate for the presidential election of 1789, the first one in the country's fledgling history. George Washington was the unanimous choice and successfully gained the presidency, but Adams did take on the vice-presidency as a consolation, ahead of Messrs Franklin and Jefferson. Adams didn't take kindly to his new role and saw it as "the most insignificant office that ever the invention of man contrived or his imagination conceived." In his new occupation, Adams supported all the major initiatives in the new government, including containing the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794 and passing secretary of the treasury Alexander Hamilton's new financial plan. Washington didn't seek a third term as president in 1796 and after a hotly contested election against friend and rival Thomas Jefferson, Adams – despite accusations of pro-British leanings – became the second president of the United States by a narrow margin in 1797. Upon assuming the presidency, the federalist Adams tried to get Jefferson on board, but he declined. This would be the first of many issues to befall Adams' regime.

The first problem the new president had to address was to pick up the pieces from Washington's tenure. Adams' biggest mistake was to keep the same cabinet that Washington had. A federalist almost only by name, he was left to deal with what was a faltering Congress. The cabinet turned out to be extremely disloyal to their president and often openly opposed him. The ruling of the Alien and Sedition Acts in 1798 aimed at stiffening national security and ending newspaper libel, but ended up decreasing his popularity even more, despite these ideas actually being passed by Congress prior to his presidency. Foreign policy was a tricky venture during his administration. It initially favoured good relations with Britain, but an ongoing feud between France and Britain had now broken out into full-scale war. Negotiations with France then disintegrated further after the French offered a bribe to the USA. Many called for war, but Adams was reluctant to drag the US into yet another conflict and stubbornly maintained his country's neutrality. Despite his best efforts, an undeclared conflict known as the Quasi-War ensued. Arising from a diplomatic episode known as the XYZ Affair, the French ordered the seizure of American merchant ships after negotiations broke down. The battles were limited to naval attacks and the fledgling US Navy performed well, capturing many French privateers and vessels. Even though he avoided war, Adams stressed the importance of the armed forces and is credited with establishing the US Navy as a force as well as guiding the young USA through a tough post-Washington period.

The episode with France was ultimately a deathblow to Adams' popularity, turning the Federalist Party against him. In the 1800 election he failed in his re-election campaign to Thomas Jefferson.

In post-presidential life, the once-determined patriot and American political behemoth lived a quiet existence on his family farm. He continued to correspond with old friend Jefferson and finally reconciled with him in 1812. The two men both passed away on the same day on 4 July 1826, the 50th anniversary of American independence. John Adams had six children and his son John Quincy became the sixth president of the US, adding to his father's legacy in US politics.

His plump appearance earned Adams the nickname 'His Rotundity' while he was president

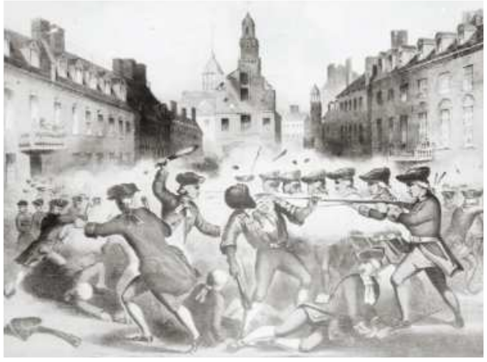
"The episode with France was ultimately a deathblow to Adams' popularity"

Defining moment

Boston Tea Party

1773

John Adams was not in town on the fateful December night of the Boston Tea Party and was shocked when he heard of what happened the next day. He was understandably concerned at how the British would react but nevertheless believed action such as this was both inevitable and significant, and so ultimately supported it. He felt that Britain would not take the colonists' demands seriously until forced to do so. Adams wrote: "This destruction of the tea is so bold, so daring, so intrepid and so inflexible, and it must have so important consequences and so lasting that I can't but consider it an epocha in history."



Defining moment

XYZ Affair

1798

A diplomatic incident involving France and the United States, this was a significant moment in Adams' presidency. The French government was struggling to finance its wars and as the USA had now allied with Britain under the terms of the 1794 Jay Treaty, the country decided to attack US merchant shipping. In response, Adams sent three envoys to France but they were unable to meet with the foreign ministers and were instead approached by three other ministers who became known as X,Y and Z. An agreement wasn't made until 1800 when an undeclared war, the Quasi-War, raged for two years.

1919

Declaration of Independence signed
The game-changing declaration announced that the 13 American colonies were now independent states and no longer part of the British Empire. 56 men sign the document, including Adams.
1776

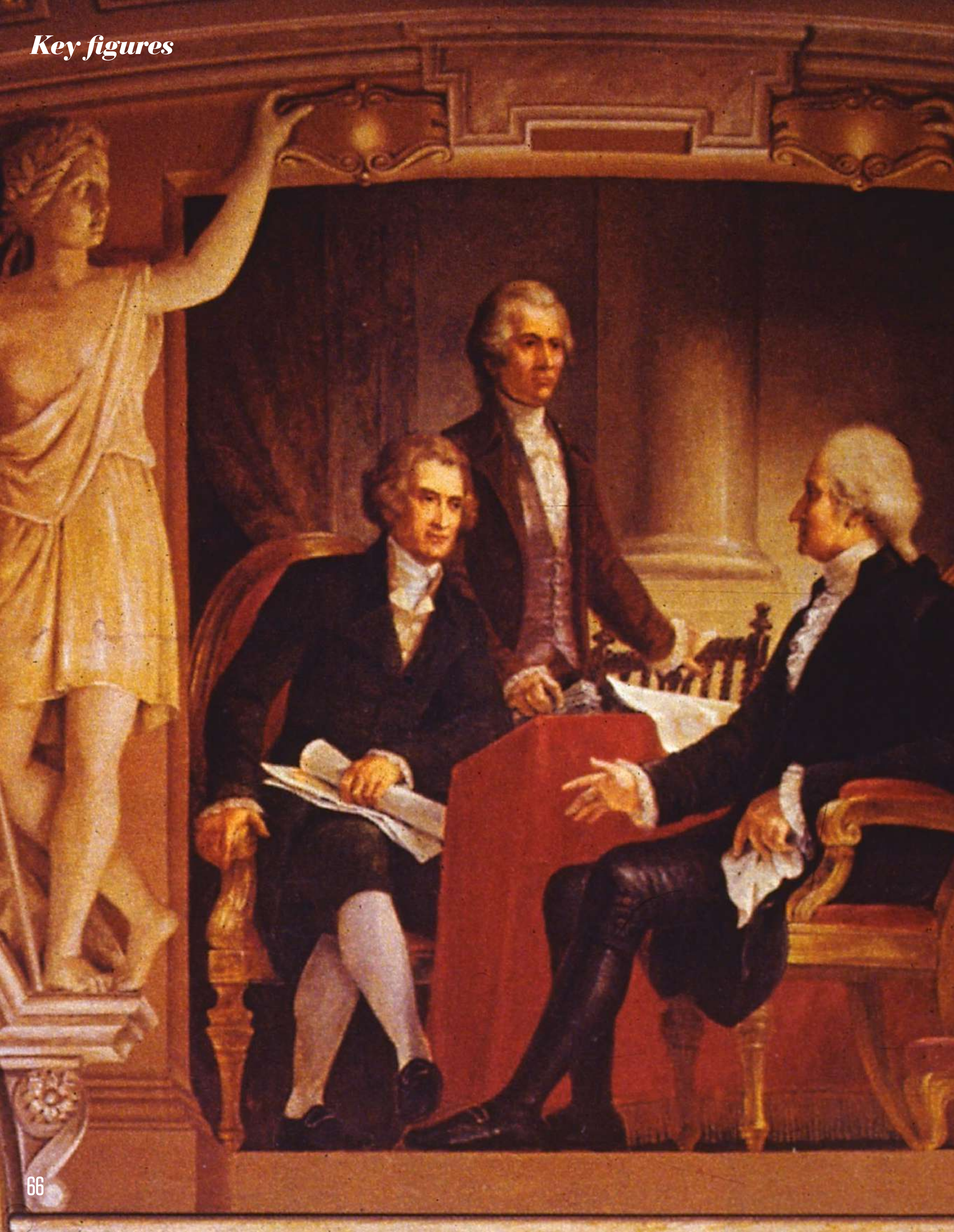
Trips to Europe
Adams travels to Europe in order to meet with the British, the French and the Dutch, seeking peace but also aid. His biggest success is with the Dutch, who offer a $2 million loan following the American victory at Yorktown.
1779-1782

Treaty of Paris
Along with Benjamin Franklin and John Jay, Adams signs the Treaty of Paris, ending the war with Britain after the victory at Yorktown and formally recognising the United States as indepenent of the British Crown.
1783

Vice president
In March, George Washington is elected as the inaugural president of the new United States, with Adams chosen as his vice president. Adams sees his position as almost pointless, given his lack of practical authority, however he remains in the job until 1797.
1789

President of the United States
On 4 March, Adams is sworn in and with his Federalist Party, gets straight to work, creating the US Navy Department and passing the Alien and Sedition Acts shortly after arriving in office.
1797

Death
At the age of 90, Adams passes away. His death marks the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and comes only a few hours after the death of his friend and rival, Thomas Jefferson.
1826



President George Washington in discussion with his Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson and Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton

The banker and the philosopher

The clash of Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson, two giants of the American Revolution, reflected their differing visions for the newborn United States

The Founding Fathers of the United States of America were an extraordinary group, combining to win independence for the new nation, but often bitterly at odds with each other over the important issues of the day. These included the foreign policy of the United States, what kind of constitutional arrangement it required, the future of slavery, the economic system to be established, as well as a host of others.

Two figures loomed the largest in the debates over the future direction of the country. Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson were, in background, outlook, and political philosophy, very nearly opposites. The tension between them, both of whom served from the beginning in the cabinet of President George Washington, would go on to shape the American political system until this day.

> Hamilton, together with James Madison and John Jay, wrote dozens of essays in favour of the ratification of the US Constitution under the pseudonym 'Publius'

One event illustrates well the vast differences in their outlook and temperament. In New York City, Jefferson was entertaining Hamilton for dinner, and Hamilton noticed the portraits of three men hanging on the walls of Jefferson's home. These happened to be of John Locke, the political philosopher; Isaac Newton, the scientist; and Francis Bacon, the polymath. Hamilton asked who they were. Jefferson replied that they were "the three greatest men the world ever produced". To this, Hamilton countered that the "greatest man who ever lived was Julius Caesar", the Roman politician and conqueror.

At root, the political dispute between the two men came down to a difference of just what America was supposed to be. Hamilton's America would be economically strong, humming with industry, and expanding rapidly. Such development would require the formation of large amounts of capital in the hands of a few who could then make the needed investments.

New York City itself would have a strong effect on Hamilton. The city was a beehive of commercial activity, dominated by an energetic merchant and banking class. These were the people whom Hamilton saw as the future of his new republic, and he was very comfortable with such men of wealth.

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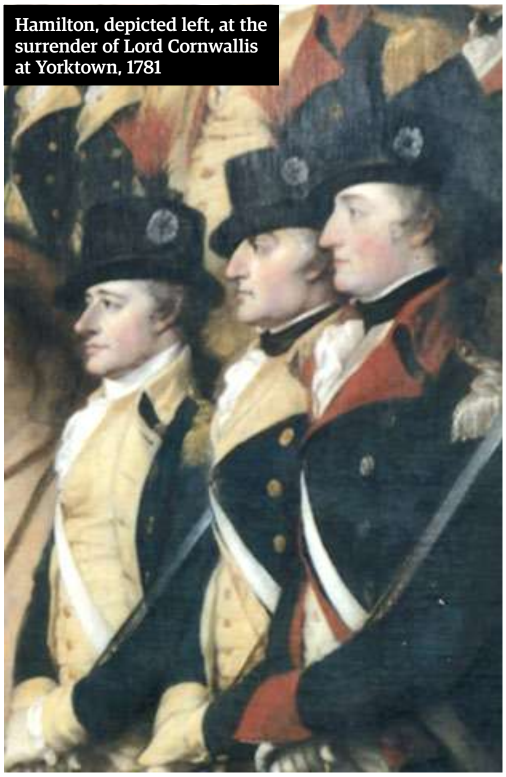
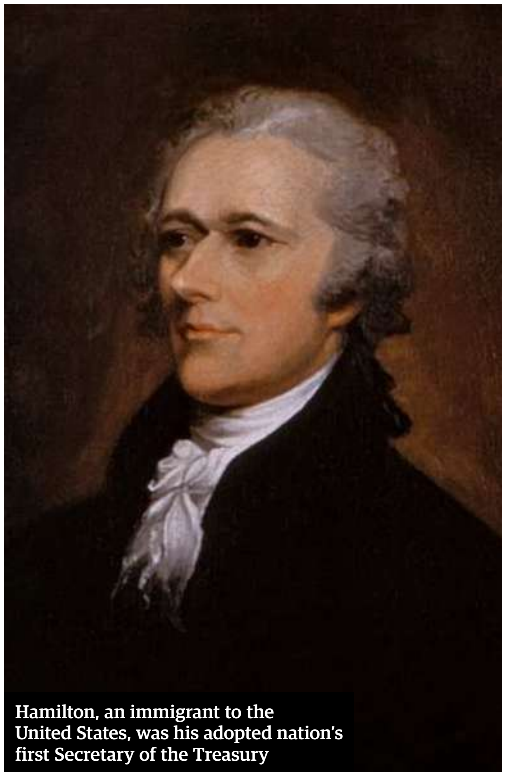
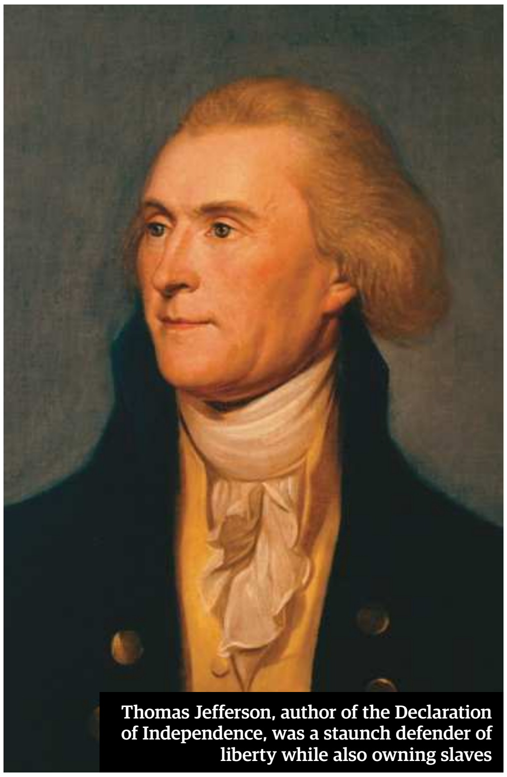


Hamilton, depicted left, at the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, 1781



Hamilton, an immigrant to the United States, was his adopted nation's first Secretary of the Treasury



Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, was a staunch defender of liberty while also owning slaves

Born circa 1757 to unwed parents on the Caribbean island of Nevis, Hamilton had come to New York City in 1772 as a teenager seeking an education, entering King's College the next year. He burned with ambition; achievement would allow him to overcome the impoverished circumstances of his birth and forget the slurs against his questionable parentage. He was also a dedicated supporter of American independence. In 1775, he joined a Patriot militia in New York City and then received a commission in the Continental Army in 1776 after the War of Independence came. By 1777, he was serving on General George Washington's staff as an aide-de-camp.

Hamilton's experience of the war years would mark his outlook ever after. He had seen first-hand how the weak institutions of the new American republic had failed the soldiers in the field. The Continental Congress had proven corrupt. It had been unable to supply the Continental Army with needed supplies or create and uphold a stable currency, simply printing money with abandon. In addition, he had seen how the states had too often gone their own ways and had not contributed enough financially to achieving victory over the British, which was owed in large part to the intervention of France on the side of the rebellious colonists. He was also unhappy with ordinary Americans, whom he thought had hoarded crops and then sold them at high prices not to the army, which needed food desperately, but to merchants. Consequently, he would trust neither the Congress, nor the states, nor the citizenry, and became a champion of a strong national government.

Jefferson's background, by contrast, was far more privileged. Where Hamilton had been born poor, Jefferson, the scion of a wealthy Virginia planter, had been born in 1743 to wealth. He had entered the College of William and Mary in 1760 in Williamsburg, Virginia, and then studied law. Jefferson, with his origin in the agricultural planter class, envisioned a largely agrarian nation of yeomen farmers, self-sufficient and free. He therefore preferred that the US be overseen by a limited federal (national) government with carefully circumscribed powers to prevent its interference with the liberty of the American people.

Jefferson was the champion of the free man above all. He had gone to great lengths to secure liberty for Virginia and the United States. Assigned the task of composing the Declaration of Independence in June 1776, the document that he wrote contained, in addition to multiple complaints against King George III, an exposition on a theory of government founded upon natural rights. "We hold these truths to be self-evident," he stated, "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." These ideas, set forth simply, but powerfully, would encapsulate the foundational principles for the United States of America.

Hamilton served in the New York state legislature and also represented it in the Continental Congress

It is troubling then that Jefferson, the icon of liberty, was also a slaveowner. He was vulnerable, to say the least, to the charge of being a complete hypocrite in loudly proclaiming liberty for all but ignoring the existence of slavery, which he practised in his own home.

Hamilton was opposed to the institution of slavery. Never a slaveowner himself, Hamilton was a member of the New York Manumission Society, which had been founded in 1785 to work for the gradual end of slavery in the state of New York as well as the end of the slave trade there. In these objectives at least, it was successful by the turn of the 19th century.

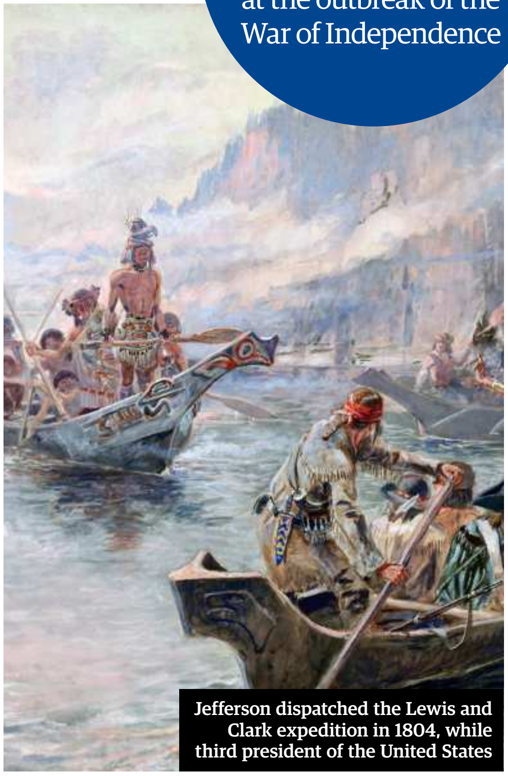
For Jefferson, slavery was a far different question. He had grown up in a family that had owned numerous slaves that worked the family plantation in Virginia. Nonetheless, he saw it as a dreadful institution and wanted it abolished, at least in theory. During the War of Independence, he hesitated to put before the Virginia legislature a bill of emancipation that had been proposed. Jefferson held many prejudices against African Americans and judged them to be an inferior race that could not live in harmony with whites. There can be little doubt that, whatever his true feelings about slavery, ending it altogether and thus freeing the slaves themselves frightened him.

Over time, he came to fear more and more what might result from the liberation of the masses of enslaved African Americans already in Virginia. Before his eyes, he had the images of the slaughter of the whites in the West Indies during the slave revolts there in the 1790s. To save Virginia, he thought that it therefore had either to maintain them in servitude or expel them from the state. Later, when he was the third president of the United States, a proposal was made in the Virginia legislature to send all freed slaves to the West where they might live on their own. Jefferson would not give the idea his support, believing that the western lands should be for whites only. Instead, he wished to eject all freed black slaves from the territory of the United States, but this was rejected as unworkable and far too expensive. Jefferson's conflicted ambivalence towards slavery, and therefore his ultimate failure to act decisively against it, is starkly shown when he wrote despairingly of it that: "We have the wolf by the ears and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go."

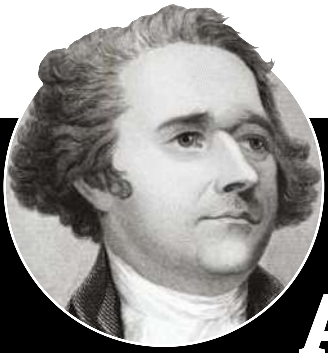
By 1783, the War of Independence was over and the United States, in the Treaty of Paris, had been recognised as an independent nation by Britain. Both Hamilton and Jefferson took up posts in George Washington's cabinet, wherein much more would come to divide them from one another. Hamilton, becoming Secretary of the Treasury in 1789, wanted to make the United States an economic powerhouse. To do this, he wanted more power for the US federal government. Jefferson, who took up the post of Secretary of State in 1790, was largely opposed to the expansion of federal power.

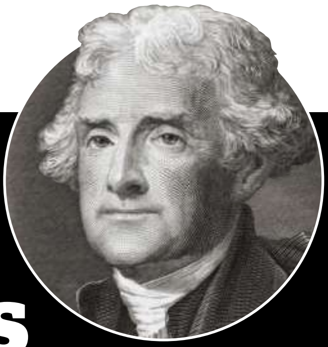
Hamilton's priority at this time was to engineer a restoration of public credit. American finances were terrible, and Hamilton, in his 1790 Report on the Public Credit, outlined proposals for fixing the nation's broken fiscal system. Debts, both among the states and the federal government, were alarmingly large. The overall total was stood at

> Though Jefferson claimed to hate the institution of slavery, he owned some 200 slaves at the outbreak of the War of Independence



Jefferson dispatched the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1804, while third president of the United States



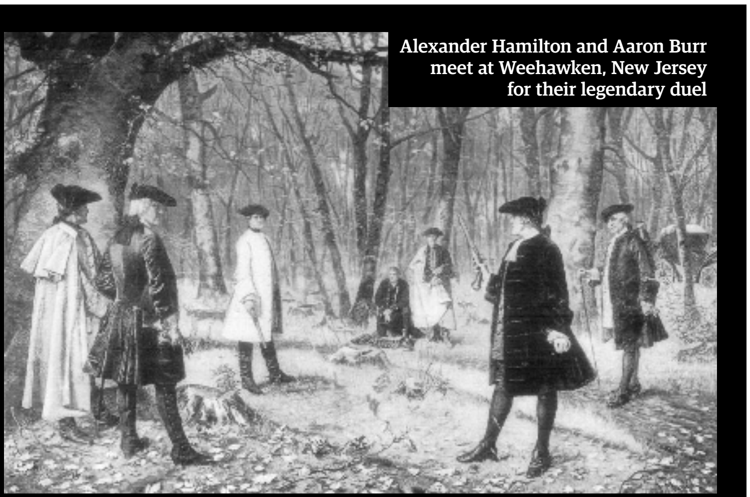


At odds

Hamilton and Jefferson often found themselves on opposing sides on many issues

	Alexander Hamilton	Thomas Jefferson
Government	Hamilton insisted that the United States had to have a strong federal government that could dominate the states. He remembered bitterly the Revolutionary War in which the states had selfishly looked out for their own, parochial interests while American soldiers suffered and starved in the field.	For Jefferson, a government that governed the least governed the best. Jefferson's ideal was an America of many small and independent farmers tending their own plots and enjoying their liberty in peace. Such a nation would need little oversight from a national government.
Domestic policy	Hamilton wanted America to be strong enough to hold its own in a tough world. For that, the United States had to develop itself economically, and encourage the development of industry. A strong system of credit, backed up by a national bank, was imperative for this to come true.	Jefferson was suspicious of the business interests that Hamilton so enthusiastically championed. Jefferson's America was an agrarian one in which yeomen farmers cultivated their land without intrusion from a powerful central government.
Foreign policy	Hamilton admired Britain very much and saw its economic system as a model to be emulated by the United States. He desired good relations with the mother country, knowing that most of America's trade was with that nation and that much of the US's tax receipts came from levies on British commercial traffic.	Recalling the destruction of the British armies in the South during the Revolutionary War, Jefferson was less friendly to Britain than was Hamilton. He much preferred France, calling the Jay Treaty of 1795 with Britain "infamous" and seeing it as a sellout of America's old ally.
Slavery	Hamilton was deeply opposed to slavery and was a leader of the abolition movement in New York. He saw Jefferson as a dire hypocrite for speaking of liberty while himself owning slaves. He castigated Jefferson's plan to expel freed slaves from the United States.	Jefferson professed a disgust with slavery yet feared what might occur if the slaves were ever freed. He was the foremost champion of democratic liberty in America and yet owned many slaves.
The Constitution	Hamilton was dubious of how robust a republic might be when based upon broad-based suffrage and elections. Hamilton had even suggested to the Constitutional Convention in 1787 the possible need for a monarch to provide stability for the nation. He feared that Jefferson was too enamoured with Revolutionary France and would discard America's hard-won gains.	Jefferson had not taken part in the drafting of the US Constitution in 1787 as he was serving as the American ambassador in France. When he learned of its contents, he was worried about the presidency, which could be renewed every four years without limit. He was happier with the separation of the powers of the government between its legislative, executive, and judicial branches.

The duel in New Jersey



Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr meet at Weehawken, New Jersey for their legendary duel

Alexander Hamilton is rightly famous for many reasons, but the paramount one may be the manner of his death. Hamilton perished on 12 July 1804 as a result of wounds received in a duel with another American politician, Aaron Burr, who had served as the third vice president of the United States.

The duel, which had taken place in Weehawken, New Jersey, the day before, came about as a result of an insult that Burr believed Hamilton had made against him. In the spring of 1804, Burr was running for the governorship of the state of New York. Another man, one Dr Charles Cooper, had claimed, in a letter published in the *Albany Gazette*, that Hamilton had called Burr "despicable". Burr insisted that Hamilton either explain what he had meant or deny that he had said the enormously offensive word at all.

Hamilton refused to do either. He claimed to be unable to give a precise definition of the word or what he had meant by it. Burr was again offended and next demanded an apology for all the negative things Hamilton had said about him, ever. Hamilton now said that whatever statements he had made against Burr in the past had related only to his political beliefs and not to his personal character. Burr was still not satisfied, and insisted upon an apology for all criticisms Hamilton had ever made about either his character or his politics. When Hamilton failed to come forward with the demanded apology, Burr, on 27 June 1804, insisted upon a duel.

The two men met for the duel at Weehawken in the early morning of Wednesday 11 July, attended by their seconds. As the challengee, Hamilton was permitted to choose the weapons to be used. He chose pistols. Hamilton fired and missed, perhaps on purpose. Burr fired and hit Hamilton above his right hip, careening through his diaphragm and liver.

The wound was not immediately fatal. Hamilton was taken across the water to New York City to the home of a friend, where he died the next afternoon.

Statue of Alexander Hamilton outside the United States Treasury in Washington, D.C.

> "Hamilton looked to history when seeking to justify the Bank of the United States, and his role model in this matter was Great Britain itself"

$77.1 million. The portion of this owed to foreign states was $11.7 million and another $40.4 million was owed to domestic creditors. The remaining portion, $25 million, was owed by various states.

Hamilton proposed to fund the US national debt by reimbursing outstanding US securities at par, meaning the original, face value of the instrument. Many of these securities had been given long ago to American soldiers who had subsequently sold them off to other purchasers for just a sliver of what they had initially been worth.

Moreover, once word of Hamilton's proposal became known, other speculators had rushed in to buy up other securities, thinking that if they bought low now, they would sell high later. This seemingly cheated the veterans of the Revolutionary War out of what was owed them. Hamilton, preferring to see money concentrated in fewer hands, which could then invest it more readily, did not see any problem with this.

Hamilton also proposed that the federal government assume the debts – a good portion of which had been created by the war – of the states. His goal in doing this would be to consolidate the debts of 13 states into one, held by the national government, which at this time was sited in New York City. A streamlined national credit tally would simplify matters tremendously.

Objections to the assumption plan came from those states that had already paid much of their own debts, such as Virginia and most of the other Southern states. It also seemed as if the federal government, under the cloak of performing a great benefit for the states via assumption, was actually engaged in a major power grab by taking over the economies of those states. James Madison, a Virginian who was on close terms with Jefferson, led much of the resistance in Congress to Hamilton's proposals.

Jefferson had Alexander Hamilton over to dinner one Sunday evening in June 1790, along with Madison. Jefferson, who had served as the American ambassador to France during much of the 1780s, wanted to secure a compromise. He was well aware that American credit had to be improved if the US as a nation was to be thought trustworthy by European statesmen and bankers. So in this matter, Jefferson was currently aligned with Hamilton.

As part of the grand bargain that the three men made at dinner that evening, Virginia gained two things. Before the state debts would be assumed, there would be a proper accounting, or settlement, of what it would have owed as a state before the debts were taken in by the federal government so that it would not wind up owing more in subsequent taxes imposed on behalf of other, less provident states. Virginia made about $13 million as a result of this settlement. Virginia would also gain the benefit of having the new capital of the United States, the future Washington, D.C., sited along the Potomac River on its border with the state of Maryland. In return, Hamilton would get his programme for restoring the national credit through Congress.

Hamilton's vision was larger still. His programme of economic development for the nation included the establishment of a 'Bank of the United States' to be chartered in Philadelphia and capitalised with ten million dollars, a sum five times larger than all the money in the three banks then existing in the country. Twenty per cent of this capital would come directly from the US federal government, with the rest raised via the sale of bank stock.

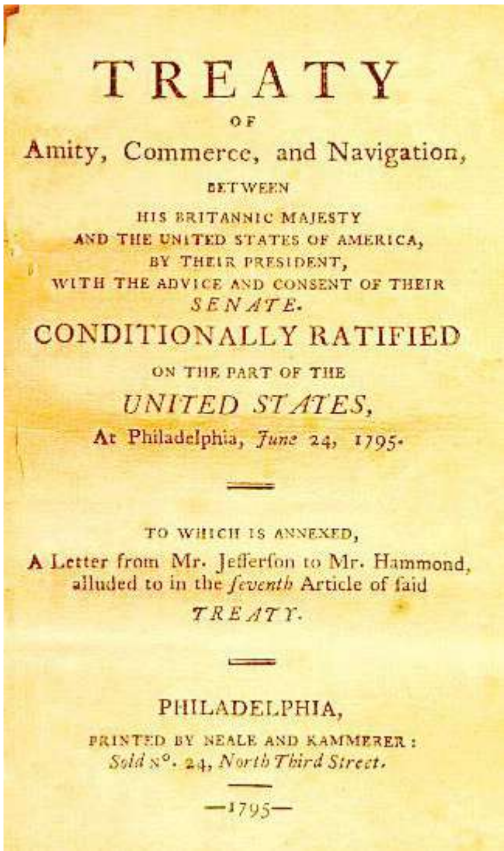
Hamilton saw Britain, which accounted for close to half of America's exports, as the better trading partner than France, which many other Americans favoured

The bank would be under private management, but the federal government would deposit its money there, which would enable the bank to issue notes that could then be used as money. By increasing the money supply in the nation, the economy would be stimulated.

The bank would also have the power to make loans which would further aid national economic growth. This new bank would be a credible institution, something Hamilton saw as imperative in America, where trust in the stability of banks was very low. A solid national bank would help to put the private credit in the country on a firm foundation.

Hamilton looked to history when seeking to justify the Bank of the United States, and his role model in this matter was Great Britain itself. Though a much smaller state than France, with only about one-third its population, Britain had built a richer and larger empire than had France. It had done this because it had more money to spend. This bounty derived largely, Hamilton believed, from England's ability, through its possession of a central bank, a funded debt, and a market for the sale of securities, to gather its money together in sufficient quantity. Better, this had been achieved without having to overtax the kingdom's subjects into penury.

Such a bank would be of little use to the small farmers who populated much of America in 1790. Rather, it would serve to elevate the urban monied classes. Jefferson looked on the proposed Bank of the United States with deep suspicion, seeing it as an attempt to recreate the America of



TREATY
OF
Amity, Commerce, and Navigation,
BETWEEN
HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY
AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
BY THEIR PRESIDENT,
WITH THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THEIR
SENATE.
CONDITIONALLY RATIFIED
ON THE PART OF THE
UNITED STATES,
At Philadelphia, *June* 24, 1795.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,
A Letter from Mr. Jefferſon to Mr. Hammond,
alluded to in the *ſeventh* Article of ſaid
TREATY.

PHILADELPHIA,
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—1795—

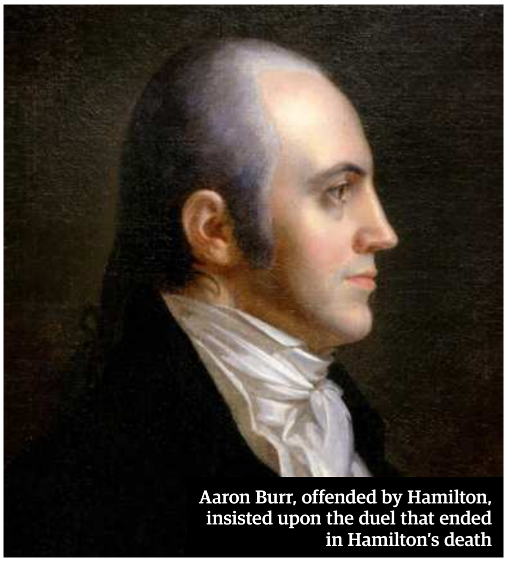
The Jay Treaty with Great Britain, which Hamilton supported despite its unpopularity in the United States

The First Bank of the United States, established at Hamilton's insistence

IN CONGRESS. JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration [illegible] States of America,

The Declaration of Independence, written primarily by Jefferson in 1776



Aaron Burr, offended by Hamilton, insisted upon the duel that ended in Hamilton's death

"Though the country eventually became the economic powerhouse Hamilton envisioned, it also retained a strong commitment to individual liberty as Jefferson intended"

the Revolution as another England. Something much like that was Hamilton's goal: a prosperous, economically powerful United States that could afford to defend itself. This would require the concentration of capital so that it could be used to the benefit of the republic.

Jefferson saw this programme as confirmation of his fears that the Anglophile Hamilton was aiming towards a very different vision of America than his own, in which federal government waxed in power while liberty lost ground before its waxing might. The bank would, Jefferson also suspected, underpin the rise of a speculator class and become a vehicle for delivering bribes to the US Congress. The US Executive, with control over the bank as well as over patronage, might one day, Jefferson warned, acquire a "kingly authority". To Jefferson, the bank, together with other elements of Hamilton's economic program, was a hazardous step towards a highly stratified society in which a few were rich and the many were poor.

After the Bank Bill chartering the bank passed Congress with ease, George Washington asked both Jefferson and Hamilton to submit briefs for and against the bank. Jefferson hurriedly wrote his in a mere hours and gave it to the president, who then handed it off to Hamilton. Hamilton then spent several days crafting his own, much lengthier opinion replying to Jefferson's, and delivered it to Washington. Jefferson was shocked and dismayed when President Washington signed the bill authorising the bank into law in February 1791.

The Secretary of State was thoroughly disenchanted with the notion of further compromises with Hamilton, whose own national vision could not inhabit the same country that Jefferson desired to see flower. They clashed also over trade. Now that the federal government would need large amounts of money to pay the debts that had been assumed, no punitive measures could easily be taken against British commerce, since British ships, arriving in American ports, were the source of the majority of taxes taken in by it. When Jefferson made proposals to Congress to place discriminatory tariffs on British commerce, Hamilton, who wanted to see no impediments of any kind levied on Britain because it would stifle this important revenue stream, saw to it that they were defeated.

Jefferson began to form, while still within Washington's cabinet, a party of opposition, which effectively meant a party opposing Hamilton. Thus was born the Democratic-Republican Party. It was filled mainly by those, North and South, who were unhappy with the direction of the nation. He also started a national newspaper for his party, the *National Gazette*, in 1791. Political factionalism had long been disapproved of in America, but with the War of Independence over, the ideological differences among the revolutionary generation

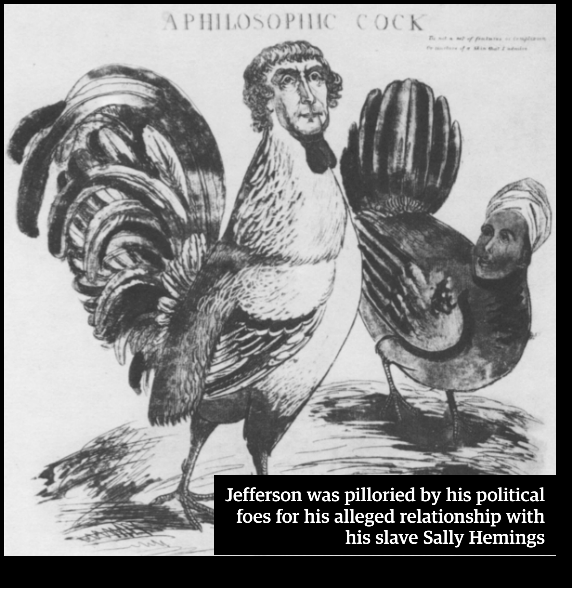
Sally Hemings

Hamilton was deeply critical of Jefferson's desire to expel freed African slaves to colonies outside of the United States, which he saw as being just as awful as slavery itself. To Hamilton, Jefferson had no grounds to his claim of his being a moral philosopher while he was also an inveterate racist.

Jefferson, Hamilton argued, was intent on preventing race mixing but, and he made this observation very elliptically, was himself having sexual relations with one of his slaves, a young woman named Sally Hemings.

Hemings, a woman of mixed ancestry and half-sister to Jefferson's wife, Martha, had accompanied Jefferson to France where he served for several years in the 1780s as the US ambassador. Hemings could have gained her freedom in France, where slaves were allowed to petition for it. Her master could not have prevented her from doing so. When Jefferson was ready to go back to the United States, he wanted Hemings to return with him. She would not hear of it. She had adapted well to her life of freedom in France. To return to America meant a return to slavery. She was also pregnant at this time by Jefferson, and that would mean her child would also be a slave.

Jefferson convinced her to go to Virginia with him only after promising that all of her children by him would be emancipated at the age of 21. Hemings relented and followed Jefferson across the Atlantic. They would have four children together who reached adulthood. All were freed as Hemings had insisted and Jefferson had agreed. She, however, remained enslaved in Jefferson's house until his death.



Jefferson was pilloried by his political foes for his alleged relationship with his slave Sally Hemings

Hamilton's portrait adorns the US $10 bill

were hardening into permanent divisions. The *National Gazette* had as its main target the so-called Federalist Party, which had informally coalesced around Alexander Hamilton in 1789.

The two men competed fiercely for Washington's ear, with the president leaning ever more towards Hamilton as the years passed. Though a Virginian and a slaveowner like Jefferson, Washington's vision for America was much more in line with those of the New Yorker, Hamilton. Jefferson was disturbed also by what appeared to be an almost monarchical cult forming around the much-revered Washington. Jefferson's first-hand view of the authoritarian royal government of France obtained while he was there as ambassador made him a committed republican, and this pushed him away from both Hamilton as well as Washington.

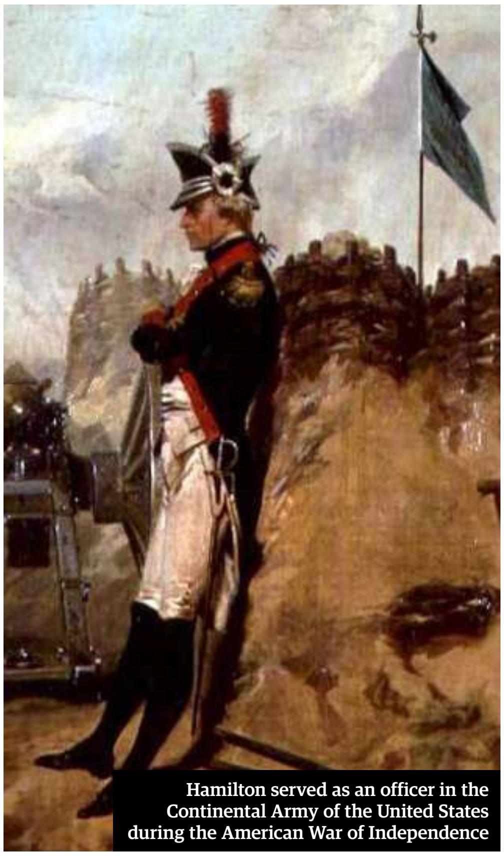
Foreign policy also divided the two men. The 1795 Jay Treaty, concluded with Britain by John Jay, Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court, was hugely controversial. Jay was burned in effigy across America when its terms were heard. Hamilton, having now retired from government, supported the treaty on pragmatic grounds. The Jay Treaty provided that the British would evacuate the posts that they held in the American Northwest, something they had failed to do as they had agreed in the 1783 Treaty of Paris that ended the Revolutionary War. It also secured limited American shipping access to British Caribbean ports, while the Americans pledged to repay the pre-war debts they owed to British creditors.

Hamilton was pelted with stones in New York City when he spoke in its favour. Jefferson, also now retired, took a much different view, seeing it as a betrayal of France, which at this time was in the midst of its own revolution. He urged the House of Representatives to block the treaty on the grounds that it could withhold the funds needed to execute the treaty. Hamilton, in the meanwhile, busied himself in writing essays in support of the treaty. Jefferson's bid to quash the agreement failed and the Jay Treaty was ratified.

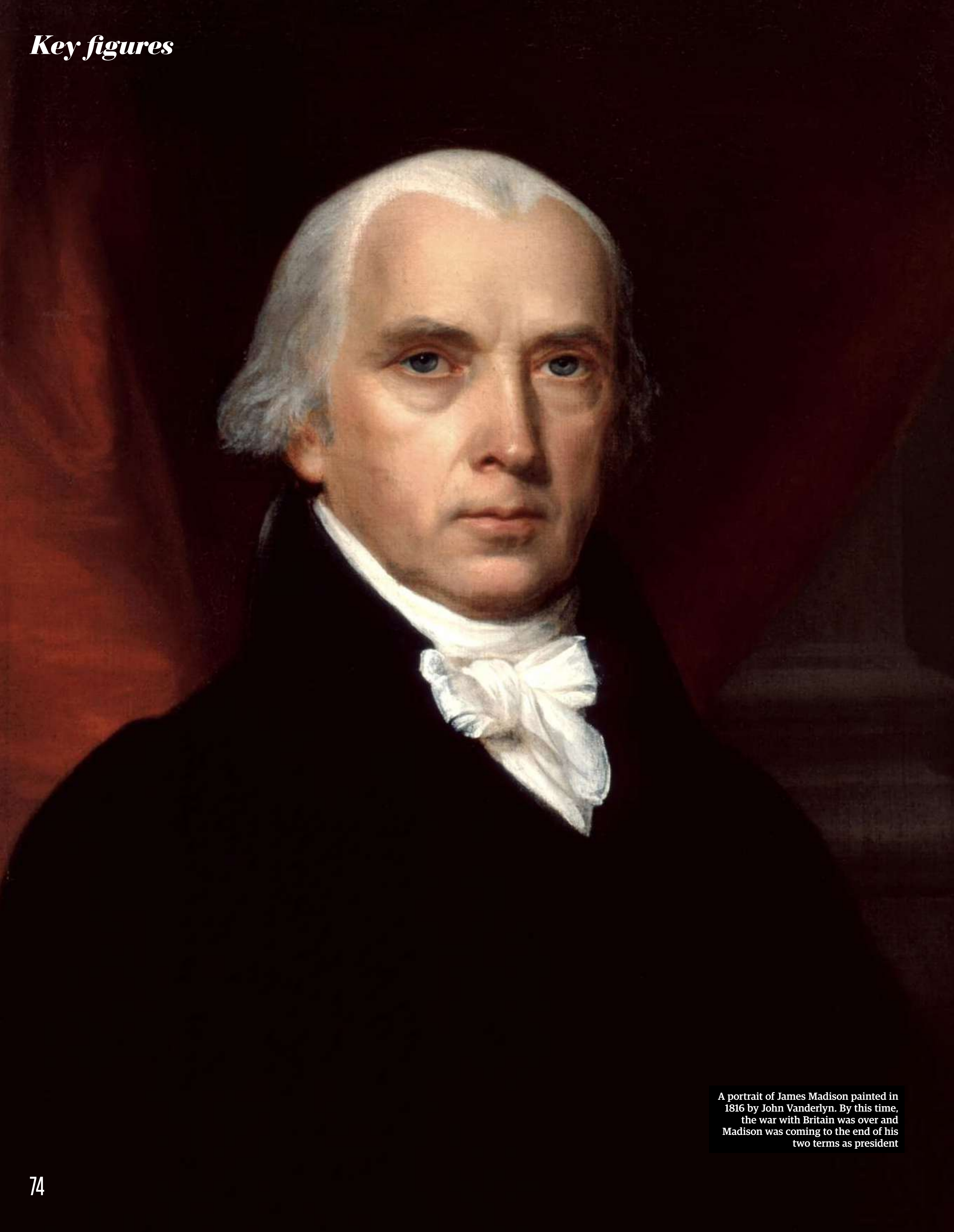
During the presidency of John Adams, the second president of the United States, Hamilton and Jefferson would be divided over the Alien and Sedition Acts. Fearing the presence of large numbers of foreigners in the country, and beset by hostilities with Revolutionary France, in 1799 the Federalist-dominated Congress passed legislation that extended the period of time in which an immigrant had to wait to become naturalised, and also authorised the deportation of foreigners. Jefferson called the acts "detestable" and saw them as being more appropriate to the Middle Ages. The Sedition Act made it illegal to say or print anything "scandalous" or "malicious" about the United States government. Jefferson saw this as a terrible blow to American liberty and thought it was thoroughly unconstitutional. Hamilton, on the other hand, came out in support of the acts, though he did so without much enthusiasm.

During the War of Independence, British soldiers occupied Jefferson's home and are said to have drunk a toast with Jefferson's wine in honour of George III's birthday

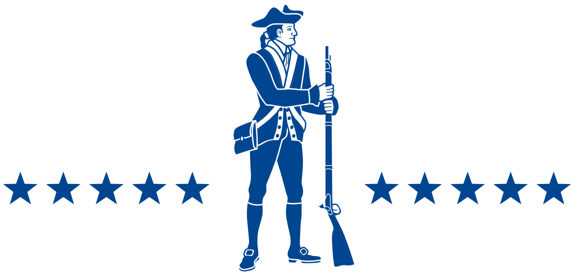
In 1800, Jefferson would be elected the third president of the United States. Hamilton would not attend his inauguration in Washington, D.C. Hamilton by this juncture was mostly absent from national politics. In 1801, he helped found the *New-York Evening Post*, but his political career was moribund. In 1804, he fought a tragic duel with Aaron Burr, the former vice president under Jefferson, and was killed. Jefferson himself would survive until 1826.


Hamilton served as an officer in the Continental Army of the United States during the American War of Independence

The philosophical antagonism that were embodied in these men – a limited government versus a strong, centralised government – resonates still in the politics of the modern United States. Though the country eventually became the economic powerhouse Hamilton envisioned, it also retained a strong commitment to individual liberty as Jefferson intended.



A portrait of James Madison painted in 1816 by John Vanderlyn. By this time, the war with Britain was over and Madison was coming to the end of his two terms as president



A small man with big ideas

James Madison, a scholarly, shy man, developed the ideas that would form the Constitution of the United States and lead the nation into war

The last words of James Madison serve to encapsulate his life. He was 85 and had been sick for a long time, with rheumatism leaving him largely bed-ridden. However, despite his hands being reduced to claws, he still managed to write countless letters to the most prominent men of the day - many of his final epistles pondering on the growing conflict between states' rights and central government that would come to a fatal confrontation 25 years later in the American Civil War.

On Madison's final earthly day, his niece, Nelly Willis, was sitting by his bed when Madison found that he was unable to swallow his food.

"What is the matter, Uncle James?" asked Nelly.

"Nothing more than a change of mind, my dear," said Madison. Then his head dropped and, according to his niece, "He ceased breathing as quietly as the snuff of a candle goes out."

For Madison, even death was a change of mind. It was appropriate for a man and a president for whom thought - deep, prolonged, sustained thought - was the foundation to all action.

James Madison was born on 16 March 1751, 85 years before that day in June (he died on 28 June 1836, to be precise) at the Belle Grove Plantation that belonged to his mother's family near Port Conway in Virginia. The original house is long gone, but the setting, on the bank of the Rappahannock River, remains impressive. 'Rappahannock' comes from the Algonquian language and means 'river of quick, rising waters'. However, the young James spent most of his childhood on his father's plantation house in Orange, Virginia, to the west of the Belle Grove Plantation and near the Blue Ridge Mountains. One of Madison's chief childhood memories was moving from their original home there to a newly built mansion, which his father named Montpelier. After his years in public life, the old Madison would return to Montpelier and pass his letter-writing retirement there (the building has been restored to its original state and is now a national historic monument.

It was a wealthy life. Both sides of Madison's family were rich. The Montpelier plantation was huge - over 4,000 acres - and the Madison family bought and kept about 100 slaves to work the land and run the house. James was the eldest of 12 children, of whom seven made it to adulthood. As a boy, Madison was taught by private tutors, becoming proficient in many subjects while showing particular aptitude for Latin and Greek. At 18, he enrolled at the College of New Jersey and, after his first year, in a fit of teenage intellectual confidence, Madison persuaded the college president that he could do two years work in one; "an indiscreet experiment of the minimum of sleep and the maximum of application, which the constitution would bear," he later said. He did the work, but was so broken down by it that he had to stay an extra year in New Jersey to recover, his health being judged too delicate to withstand the long journey home.

> To general surprise, at 43 Madison married 26-year-old Dolley Payne Todd - a widow with an infant son. The marriage would prove long and happy

Cushioned by his family wealth, the young Madison returned to the family home at Montpelier in 1772 and started a desultory study of law but, in truth, he was still casting around for a purpose and a role. He started to find that purpose two years later, when he became a member of the local Committee of Safety, one of the patriotic, pre-revolution groups that recruited militias for local protection. The passage of two more years saw tensions between Britain and its colonies reach breaking point, and the Declaration of Independence on 4 July 1776. Madison had been part of the convention raised in Virginia that wrote the state's first constitution and that pushed the Continental Congress towards its Declaration, but he lost out in the elections to the state assembly when his opponent promised voters free whisky if he won, which Madison believed "inconsistent with the purity of moral and republican principles". However, Madison was appointed to the Virginia Council of State in 1778, where he became a friend to and ally of Thomas Jefferson - Virginia's governor during the War of Independence. This was to be the defining political relationship of his life, and one that would, perhaps more than any other, shape the future of the new republic.

In 1780, Madison was elected to the Continental Congress, the ruling body of the United States during most of the war years. He was 29 at his election; while he was the youngest member of the body, he soon won respect for his understanding

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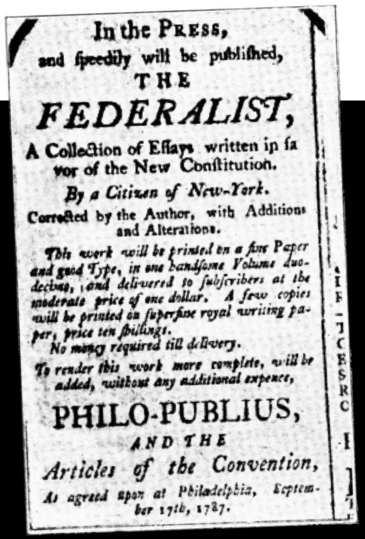


In the PRESS,
and ſpeedily will be publiſhed,
THE
FEDERALIST,
A Collection of Eſſays written in fa
vor of the New Conſtitution.
By a Citizen of New-York.
Corrected by the Author, with Additions
and Alterations.

This work will be printed on a fine Paper and good Type, in one handſome Volume duodecimo, and delivered to ſubſcribers at the moderate price of one dollar. A few copies will be printed on ſuperfine royal writing paper, price ten ſhillings.
No money required till delivery.
To render this work more complete, will be added, without any additional expence,
PHILO-PUBLIUS,
AND THE
Articles of the Convention,
As agreed upon at Philadelphia, September 17th, 1787.

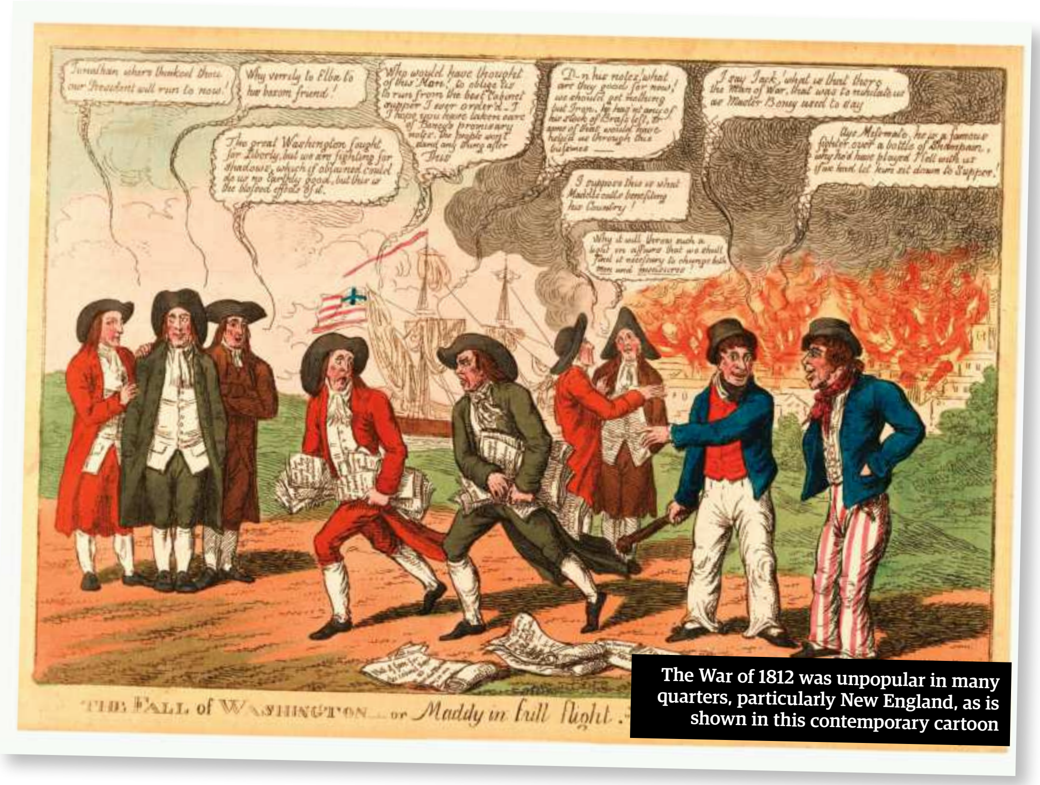
Madison and co employed all the techniques of persuasion and marketing available to them at the time to persuade the public to adopt the new constitution

Reason and politics

Having written a new constitution, its framers had to sell the document to the people and, in particular, the delegates to the state conventions that would be called to ratify it. In order to present their arguments in its favour, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay wrote a series of 77 essays for publication in New York newspapers, the essays appearing between October 1787 and May 1788. The essays, with eight more that appeared later in the press, were published as *The Federalist* on 28 May 1788 (the custom of calling them *The Federalist Papers* is a 20th-century innovation). The essays appeared under the pseudonym Publius.

Taken together, they represent the most compelling argument for the rationale behind the new constitution – and thus why it should be adopted – that was proposed following the Constitutional Convention. Working on the assumption that men, at least in the political sphere, act for their own self-interest – either individually or as part of a larger group – Madison, Hamilton and Jay argued that the new constitution would protect the country and its inhabitants by creating institutions that took account of these tendencies in people and stacked them against each other, thus producing a stable and fair form of government.

One of the key essays, 'Federalist 10', was written by Madison and in it he argued against the idea, prevalent at the time, that republican governments could only work in small states, such as the old Greek city states, where it was possible for people to have personal knowledge of all the political players. Madison argued that the opposite was true, and that a large (and America was large and getting larger all the time) state, with a varied mix of people and interests, would be more stable, as no one faction could gain a majority and impose its will upon everybody else.


Jonathan, where thinkest thou our President will run to now!
Why verrily to Elba to his bosom friend!
The great Washington fought for Liberty, but we are fighting for shadows, which if obtained could do us no Earthly good, but this is the blessed effects of it.
Who would have thought of this Man! to oblige us to run from the best Cabinet supper I ever order'd.– I hope you have taken care of Boney's promisary notes. the people won't stand any thing after this
D–n his notes, what are they good for now! we should get nothing but Iron, he han't any of his stock of Brass left, & some of that would have help'd us through this business ——
I suppose this is what Maddie calls benefiting his Country!
Why it will throw such a light on affairs that we shall find it necessary to change both men and measures!
I say Jack, what is that there the Man of War, that was to annihilate us as Master Boney used to say
Aye Messmate, he is a famous fighter over a bottle of Champain, why he'd have played Hell with us if we had let him sit down to Supper!
THE FALL of WASHINGTON.....or Maddy in full flight.

The War of 1812 was unpopular in many quarters, particularly New England, as is shown in this contemporary cartoon

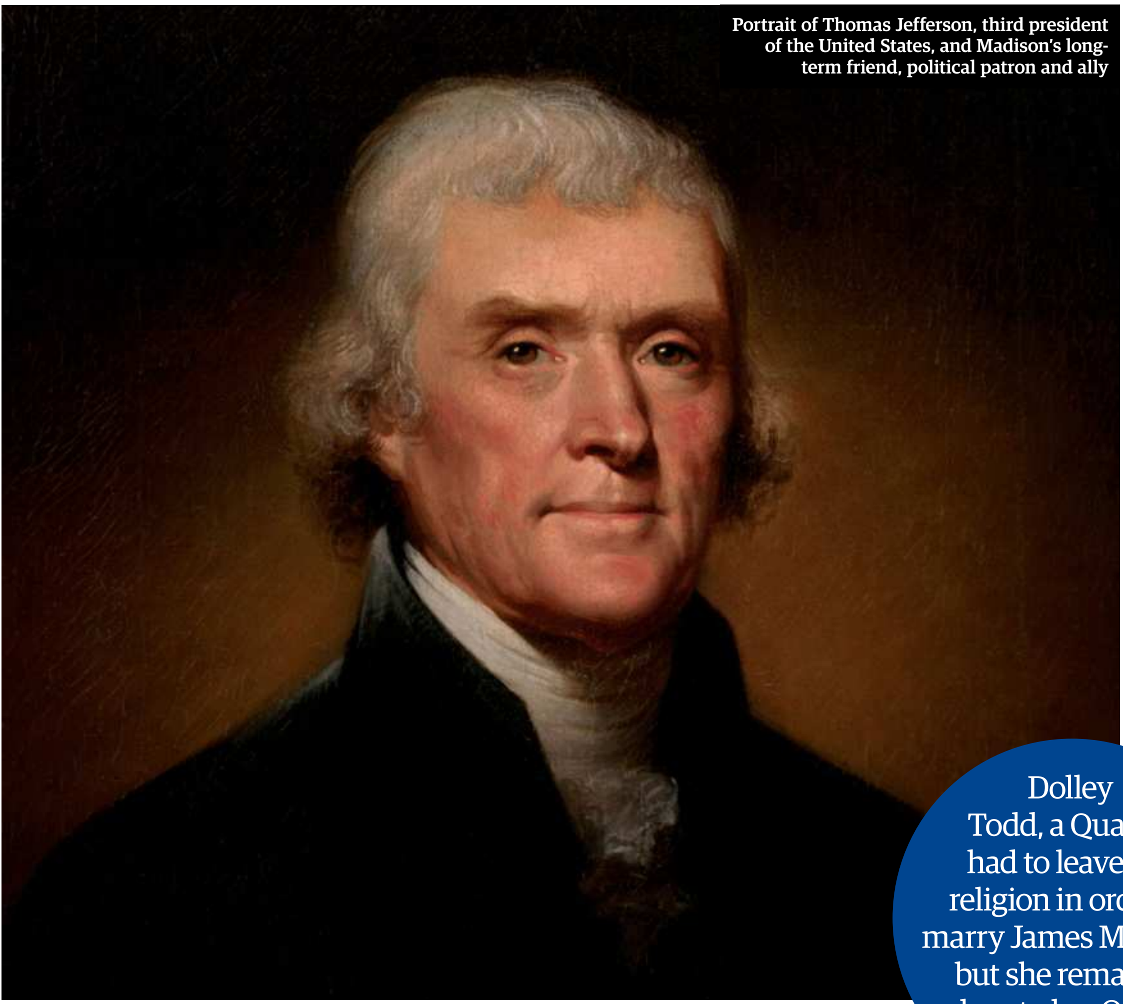
of the issues it faced. He also saw, first hand, the difficulties of pulling disparate and obdurately independent states and delegates together to form the government of a single, coherent nation. This understanding deepened from 1784 onwards when Madison was back in Virginia as a member of its state legislature, his term at the Congress having reached its limit. Working in the Virginia Assembly, Madison saw how difficult it was for legislators to bear in mind the wider national interest when dealing with the demands of their constituents. These difficulties threatened to tear apart the newly born nation and, in response, Madison, Alexander Hamilton and others called for a convention to amend the Articles of Confederation that were the country's constitution.

In the end, only five states sent delegates to the Annapolis Convention in 1786 (although Madison and Hamilton were among those present), but it was becoming increasingly clear that something needed to be done to cement the confederation before it broke apart. The need was made urgent by Shays' Rebellion, an uprising in Massachussetts in 1786 and 1787 that led to the return of George Washington to national politics and the calling of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

This was the meeting for which James Madison had been preparing throughout his adult life. Thomas Jefferson, who had been appointed the US ambassador to France, had shipped Madison a crate load of books on history and political theory, which Madison read voraciously through the spring and summer of 1786. In particular, Madison read the history of previous confederations, and their tendency to split apart. He wrote, "When we see the same faults followed regularly by the same misfortunes, we may reasonably think that if we could have known the first, we might have avoided the others." All his reading and his experience of government convinced Madison of one thing: unless there is a strong, central authority, a confederacy will break asunder. This was the conviction that Madison brought with him to the Constitutional Convention when it met on 25 May 1787.

But even before the Convention began, Madison had rendered it a valuable service; he had persuaded George Washington that he must be present. With Washington as chairman, and a list of delegates that included heroes of the war for independence, judges, governors and congressmen, the Convention had the necessary authority to write a new constitution for the assembled states. But whether the states would be united or divided by the new constitution remained an open question, with many states' delegates arguing for a loose confederation with a minimum of central authority. It was here that Madison's intensive preparation really came into play. He had come to Philadelphia with a plan for a new form of government that he soon persuaded the other delegates from Virginia to adopt as their own – so much so that Virginia's governor, Edmund Randolph, presented it to the convention on 29 May as the Virginia Plan. Having such a well-worked-out plan presented to the convention just four days after it had assembled served to set the terms of debate and discussion for the next three-and-a-half months. During those months, through the heat and humidity of a Philadelphia summer, the delegates kept the windows closed so that they could not be overheard, and Madison sat at the front, through almost every hour of the proceedings, taking note of the contributions "with a labor and exactness beyond comprehension" according to Jefferson.

Benjamin Franklin – by this time the elder statesman of the new nation – had worried what the sun painted on the back of George Washington's presiding chair represented. But by the end of the convention, he had "the happiness to know it is a rising and not a setting sun."



Portrait of Thomas Jefferson, third president of the United States, and Madison's long-term friend, political patron and ally

> Dolley Todd, a Quaker, had to leave her religion in order to marry James Madison, but she remained close to her Quaker family

The Constitution the Convention proposed was based on the plan that the delegates from Virginia had proposed from the ideas Madison had suggested. It called for the division of governmental powers between an executive, a free judiciary, and a bicameral legislature, and this division of powers was based on Madison's acute observation on the nature of the men who sought political office and their reasons for doing so: "1. ambition 2. personal interest. 3. public good. Unhappily the two first are proved by experience to be most prevalent." As Madison said, "all men having power ought to be distrusted to a certain degree", for "in framing a government of men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: You must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place, oblige it to control itself."

Such was Madison's influence over the proceedings that, when a new constitution was finally agreed, he became known as 'the father of the Constitution'. The proposed new constitution envisaged a balance between the rights of the states and the federal government, but with Madison's overall plan for the structure of the new federal government in place. Madison had also succeeded in getting agreement that the constitution would be considered, and approved or rejected, by state conventions rather than the state legislatures. But that still left the selling of the new constitution to the existing states, each suspicious of its rights. To that end, Madison, along with Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, wrote a series of newspaper essays that came to be called *The Federalist Papers*, explaining the theory, practice and practicalities of the new constitution. There were 85 essays and Madison wrote 29 of them.

> "Whether the states would be united or divided by the new constitution remained an open question"

At the time, Virginia was the most populous state; if it did not ratify the new constitution, then it would likely fail. It was a close-run thing, for the state convention had many convinced anti-federalists among its delegates, and the most accomplished orator of the day, Patrick Henry, was among these staunch anti-federalists. Madison was no match for him in oratory, but his reasoned arguments won round enough delegates for the constitution to be ratified, by 89 votes to 79. The other states followed and the Constitution became the grounding of the new government, and George Washington its first president. Madison was elected to Congress and became President Washington's chief advisor, setting the agenda for the first Congress and ensuring that Thomas Jefferson was appointed the first secretary of state. But his greatest achievement during the first Congress was his sponsorship of and guidance through its various legislative stages of a series of amendments to the Constitution that are known today as the Bill of Rights. Of the ten items in the final Bill, Madison was responsible for those that guaranteed freedom of the press, jury trials and the protection of property.

However, Madison's relationship with Washington came under strain over what the former regarded as Washington's favouritism towards British interests over France, and it ultimately broke when Washington concluded a peace treaty with Britain. There was war between Britain and revolutionary France, and Madison favoured the French. Together with Thomas Jefferson, who had also resigned from the government, he formed the Democratic-Republicans as an opposition party. The 1796 election was hard fought, but the Federalists won and John Adams became president. Returning to Virginia, Madison worked towards the election of Thomas Jefferson next time round, and his friend duly won the 1800 election. Jefferson promptly appointed Madison secretary of state, a position he held throughout Jefferson's terms in office. When Jefferson stood down in 1808, Madison was to replace him and become the fourth president of the United States of America.

President Madison's time in office was dominated by the dispute with Britain that spiralled into the War of 1812. Madison had been convinced that war would produce a swift American victory by invading Canada, but that proved not to be the case, although the fledgling American navy acquitted itself well.

In a contest of fluctuating fortunes, by 1814, when Napoleon had been defeated for the first time, British forces went as far as burning down the White House and Congress in Washington. However, American forces also won victories and, by 1815, both sides were keen for a swift resolution. The Treaty of Ghent left the status quo ante largely unchanged, but the young nation took it as a victory, and its arrival on the world stage as a major power. Departing from office, Madison used his retirement to write letters, oversee the family plantation and help the University of Virginia to establish itself. Still active in thought and agile in conversation, he had his final change of mind on 28 June 1836.

Spies, lies and Patriots

How a group of cunning Americans brought about the downfall of the British – using any means necessary

Words Alice Barnes-Brown

On the eve of independence, America was a dangerously divided place to be. Even if you cared little for politics, you had to choose your side. Were you loyal to your king, or did you dream of a better nation, free from the yoke of the Old World? Neighbours viewed each other with suspicion, and as relations with the mother country worsened, so too did relations between communities.

Soon, society could be divided into two groups – the Loyalists and the Patriots. If an independent America was your goal, you were firmly in the Patriot camp. If you remained true to the sovereign, then you were a loyalist.

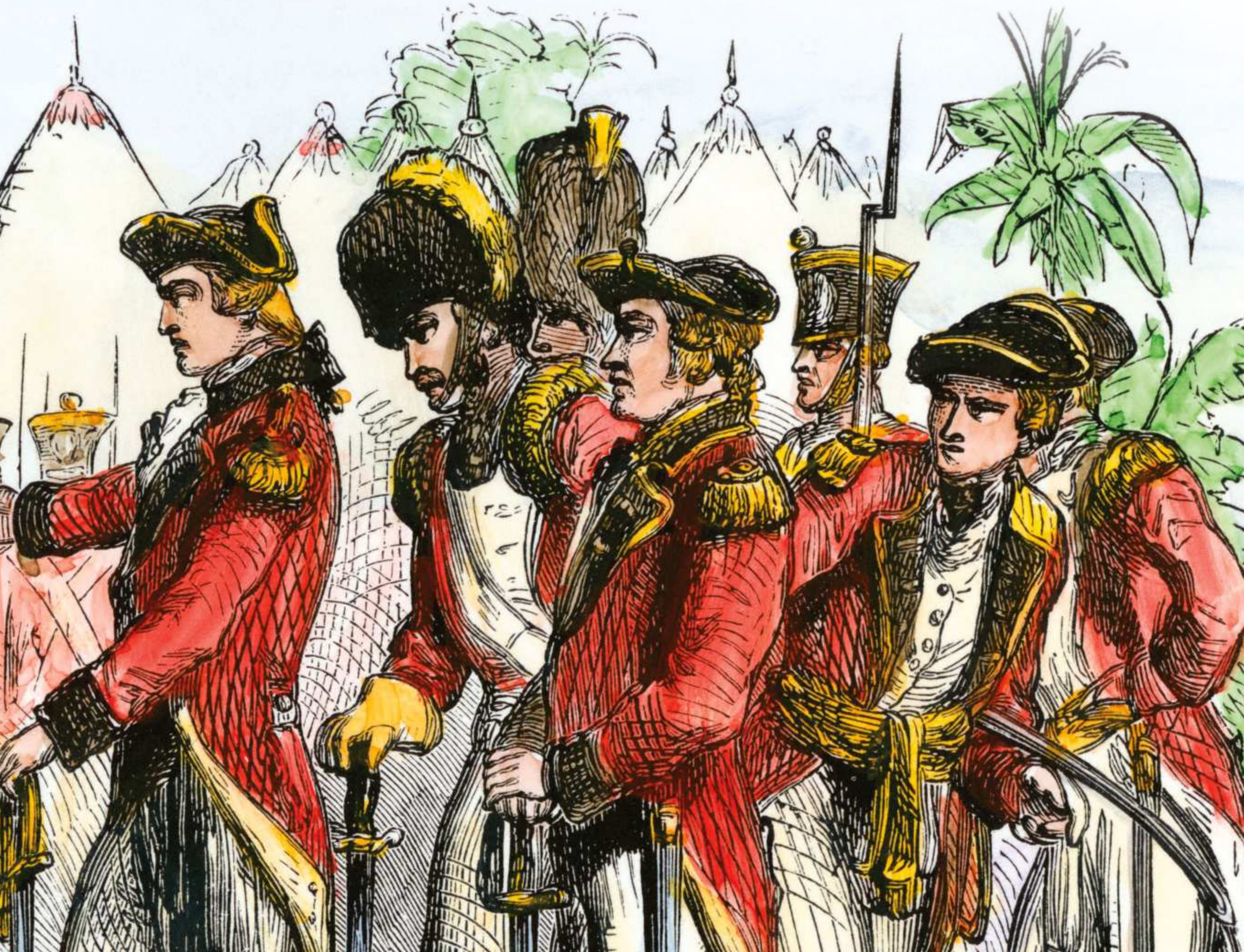
Even though tensions ran high, without any formal organisation, the Patriots didn't stand a chance of ultimately defeating the mighty British. When the Revolutionary War finally broke out, the Patriots were, to say the least, the underdogs. However, a growing national consciousness helped to transform this ad hoc group into a formidable force.

The Patriots, like Americans themselves, were a diverse bunch. Men, women and children could all be Patriots, even if their most radical act was simply to quarrel with their loyalist neighbours, boycott British goods, or champion homemade products. But they had one advantage – numbers. Patriotic citizens were spread across every corner of America, ready to fight for their liberty.

Slowly but surely, the Patriots began to organise themselves. While people out in the countryside were resisting in any way they could, a political elite was forming in Boston. Men like George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams and John Hancock were beginning to make their mark on society, trying to inspire Americans into rebellion. Indeed, it was Franklin who coined the term 'Patriots' in the lead-up to the Revolutionary War. This served as a banner that proud Americans could gather under, and a nationalistic mood swept across the nation.

The British are coming

Paul Revere, who brought news of the imminent British invasion, is one of New England's most legendary Patriots. The silversmith rode into Lexington, Massachusetts, in April 1775, famously shouting, "The British are coming!" at the top of his voice in order to mount a heroic civilian defence against the strength of the Crown.



Unlike the wealthy Bostonian rebels, Revere was an ordinary working man, whose patriotic spirit would later inspire countless tales.

Thanks to the rallying cries of men like Revere, civilian militias sprang up all over the Thirteen Colonies. Within a week of Revere's legendary outing, up to 16,000 New Englanders had mustered up a siege army to surround the occupied city of Boston. Threatening and harassing the British there, the militia proved that thousands of Americans were willing to make sacrifices for their freedom.

What they lacked in experience, they made up for in morale. When the Continental Congress took charge of the New England militias in June 1775, enthusiasm for the cause was at an all-time high. With General George Washington now at the head of the so-called Continental Army, for the first time a feeling of national bonding and a faint whiff of victory teased American senses.

This was heightened in the early days of the war when the Patriot army inflicted some serious defeats on the British, despite their lack of resources. While the famous Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775 was technically a loss for the Continental Army, considering their inexperience and poor resources, the fact that they inflicted approximately 1,000 casualties on the better-funded British was certainly a testament to their commitment.

On the home front, too, regular civilians were willing to fight for their rights. 200,000 people guarded their own communities as militiamen and supported the Continental Arm, despite Washington's disdain for them. Washington's conceit for the militias was rather judgmental and civilians could be enormously helpful. For example, in the 1781 Battle of Cowpens, South Carolina local Catherine Moore Barry shared the benefit of her detailed knowledge of the land and warned her fellow Patriots of the oncoming British Army. This allowed the Americans to trap their enemies.

However, enthusiasm (and with it, the number of Patriot soldiers) dwindled as the war waged on. Washington realised this, describing the men who did volunteer as a "drop in the ocean", and setting quotas to maintain manpower.

Many states ended up drafting men in to meet these demands, and in 1778 Congress did the unthinkable – it enlisted African-American slaves in the Continental Army. 5,000 black soldiers served, hoping that they could win their emancipation once the war was over.

Agent 355 is the mystery alias of one female member, whose legend inspired books and artistic reconstructions

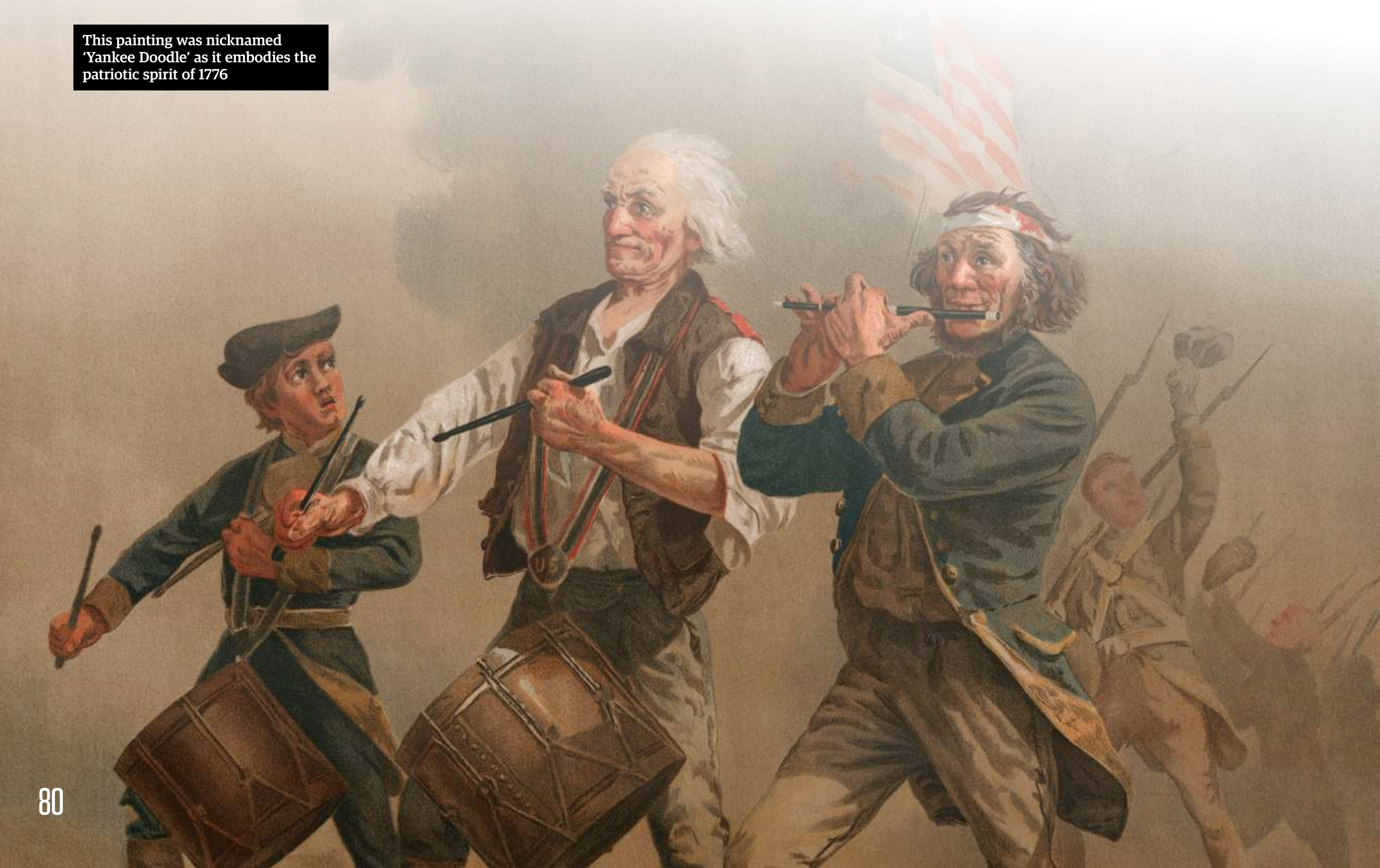
Agent 711

But the Patriots knew they would not win the Revolution with just brute force alone, especially against the better-equipped, better-manned and overall better-prepared British. Washington's stroke of genius was to set up an intricate network of spies, pioneering the use of espionage tactics far ahead of his time.

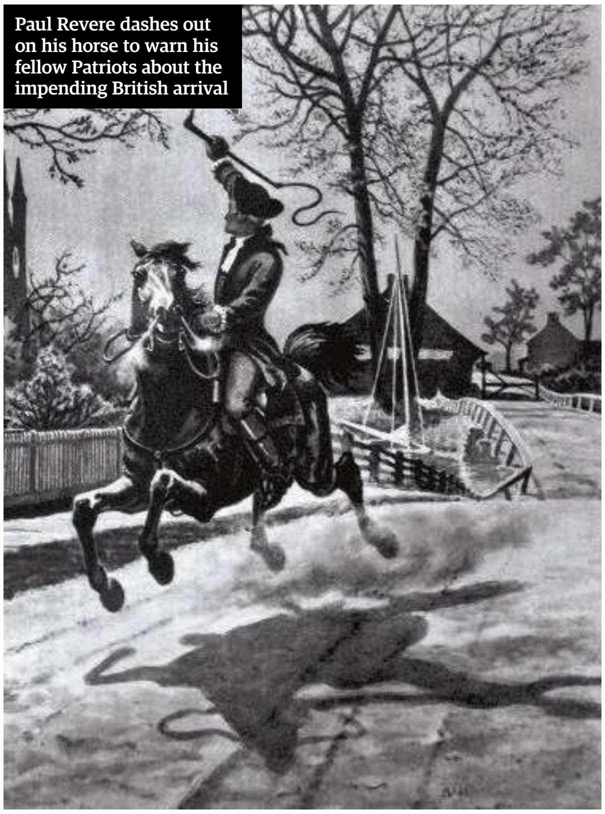
Arguably the most famous of these undercover organisations was the Culper Spy Ring, founded in 1778 by Washington himself. Made up of farmers, tailors, merchants, officials and other committed civilians, they built up a vast array of connections within the British establishment, so they could gain as much information as possible. Membership in the ring went all the way to the top – Washington's code name in the group was 'Agent 711' – but it was difficult to know who to trust.

After all, Washington knew firsthand the dangers of compromising the secret identity of spies. His 21-year-old friend Nathan Hale had been caught spying by the British in 1776, and he was swiftly executed without trial. Wounded by Hale's premature death, Washington ensured that any future espionage was to be conducted with the utmost care.

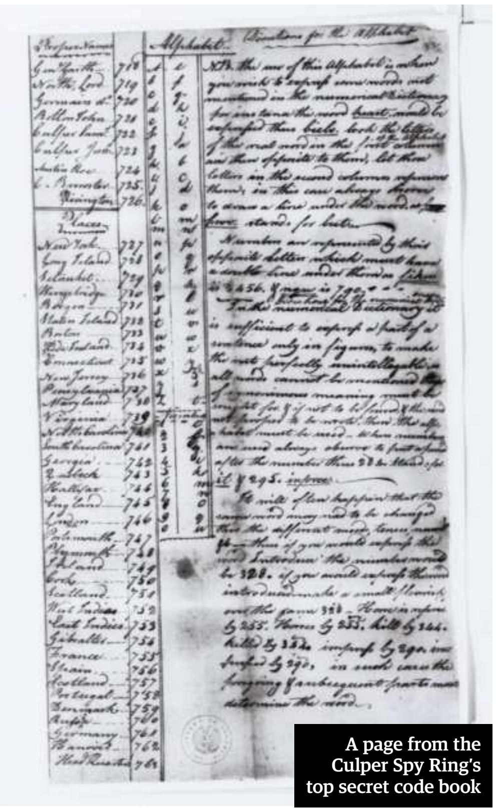
Benjamin Tallmadge, a cavalry officer with some undercover experience, was charged with building a functional and highly secretive spy network. Tallmadge (alias John Bolton) recruited friends and acquaintances from his Long Island



This painting was nicknamed 'Yankee Doodle' as it embodies the patriotic spirit of 1776



Paul Revere dashes out on his horse to warn his fellow Patriots about the impending British arrival



A page from the Culper Spy Ring's top secret code book

hometown, whom he had total trust in – such as Robert Townsend (alias Samuel Culper Junior), Caleb Brewster, and Abraham Woodhull (also known as Samuel Culper Senior).

The younger 'Culper' set himself up as a loyalist coffee shop owner of an establishment that British officers and their American allies frequented. To add to the illusion, he also wrote pro-Tory articles in the *Royal Gazette*. This cover was convincing enough to fool a number of his enemies, creating a false sense of security in the coffee house. Officers might accidentally reveal too much about British troop movements, and the loose chatter of pro-British Americans allowed Tallmadge to gauge what morale on the other side was really like.

Once a key piece of intel had been gathered, another member of the ring – Anna Strong – would send a secret message to the higher-ups, using her clothes on the washing line to signal that she was privy to an important secret. Alternatively, precious information might be hidden at a farm owned by 'Culper Senior', and transported across the Long Island Sound to Connecticut by Caleb Brewster, who happened to own a whaling ship that regularly made the journey.

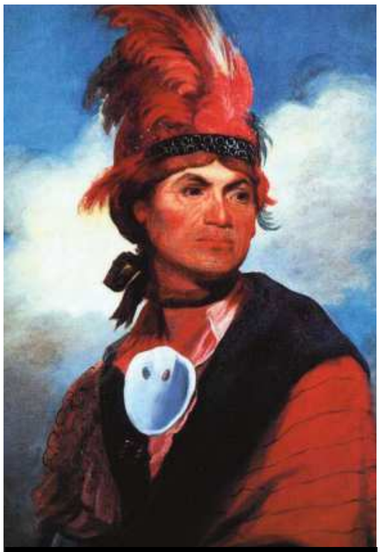
As well as collecting real intelligence for themselves, Washington and his spies were experts at disseminating fake information among the British. Propaganda was important, and the Culper network would create letters with incorrect intelligence, as well spread rumours that both discredited the British Army and exaggerated American prowess.

But spying was a dangerous job, and getting caught meant getting executed. To avoid detection, the Culper ring used a variety of innovative tactics. As well as the washing line code, the group used advanced ciphers to ensure their messages would not be read by the wrong people. Many words and terms were encrypted as a three-digit number, based on their position in the *New Spelling Dictionary* by John Entick, and only a few spies were entrusted with the key to crack the code. It's possible they used invisible ink – a new invention at the time – but this has not been conclusively proven.

Transmission of evidence was certainly slow, but the Culper ring still managed to be a thorn in the side of the British. Perhaps their most rewarding work was discovering British plans to overwhelm a weary French force, who had come to the aid of the Revolutionaries. They had only just arrived on American shores and would certainly have lost any combat with the British, but thankfully the Culper ring warned the outnumbered French of the attack so they could get to safety.

Even after the Revolutionary War had ended, the identity of Culper's spies was not revealed until long afterwards for fear of reprisals by the local Loyalist communities. But not even the British could deny their success. Major George Beckwith, the man in charge of the British spy network in the Colonies, irritably remarked that "Washington did not really outfight the British; he simply out-spied us!" on his return to London.

The Patriots and their clandestine spies eventually won the day in 1783 when America's independence was confirmed. Without their efforts, America might be a very different place – it may have remained a British colony for much longer, or it might never have celebrated an Independence Day at all.



Thayendanegea (Anglicised to Joseph Brant) was the leader of the Six Nations tribal organisation, and became an officer in the British Army

Britain's unexpected allies

The Native Americans who supported the British cause

In the war against the upstart colonists, Britain searched for help deep within the belly of the beast. Surprisingly, the Crown found it was able to call upon thousands of Native Americans, who believed that their future was more secure under British occupation than it would be if America was an independent nation.

Naturally, they had reason to be concerned. History had taught them that if left unchecked, the colonists were dangerous and could kill them in the blink of an eye. This was especially true when Americans were expanding their settlement, almost annihilating anyone in their way. Washington himself had even become known as "town-destroyer" to some Iroquois, having led attacks on a number of tribes on the frontier.

In an attempt to stop the bloodshed, the British government forbade colonists from settling west of the Appalachian Mountains. For rural Americans, this proved to be one of their chief grievances with the British, as they believed that Native Americans were being treated better than most of the white, British subjects.

Many tribes, such as the Cherokee, threw their lot in with the British, serving on the front line as soldiers, forming political coalitions with other tribes, and helping to share information about the terrain. They became such an integral part of the Loyalist cause that in 1775, a worried Continental Congress told them "We desire you to remain at home, and not join on either side, but keep the hatchet buried deep."

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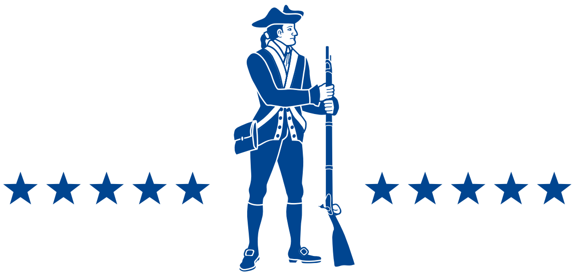


Loyal to the bitter end

Many American colonists remained loyal to the Crown during the American Revolution. New York City became their haven

New York City's experience during the Revolutionary War differed markedly from that of most other large colonial cities. Both Boston and Philadelphia remained primarily in Patriot, or rebel, possession throughout the course of the war, whereas New York City, which fell to royal forces in September 1776, would become the centre of British operations during these years of struggle. New Yorkers endured many hardships during the war years, but the city remained a haven for Loyalists from other parts of the American colonies.

It had long been a place with strong ties to the Crown. Before it fell to the British, about two-thirds of the property there belonged to Loyalists. New York was hesitant, at best, about the prospect of independence, and New York 'state' had been the last of the original Thirteen to give its assent to the Declaration of Independence. Not for nothing was New York City nicknamed 'Torytown'. The city would remain a stronghold of loyalism until the British at last evacuated the city in 1783.

Fighting back

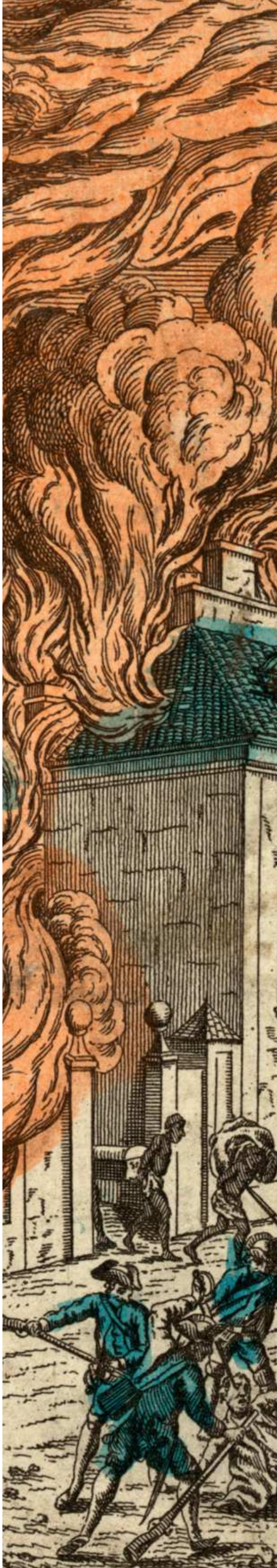
Despite the mauling that they had inflicted on the rebels in 1776, British writ would never extend much further than New York City itself. Westchester County, lying directly to the north, would become known for the viciousness of the guerilla-style conflict waged by gangs of men over the so-called 'Neutral Ground', where neither Loyalist nor Patriot was in command. New York (as a colony, not just the city) contributed far more than its share of soldiers to the King's cause. Out of some 50,000 Loyalist soldiers in all, New York sent 23,500 to serve under the King's colours. New York would actually provide more men to fight for King George than it did George Washington. These soldiers were formed into regiments such as DeLancey's Cowboys; the King's Royal Regiment of New York; the King's Orange Rangers; and the Loyal American Regiment.

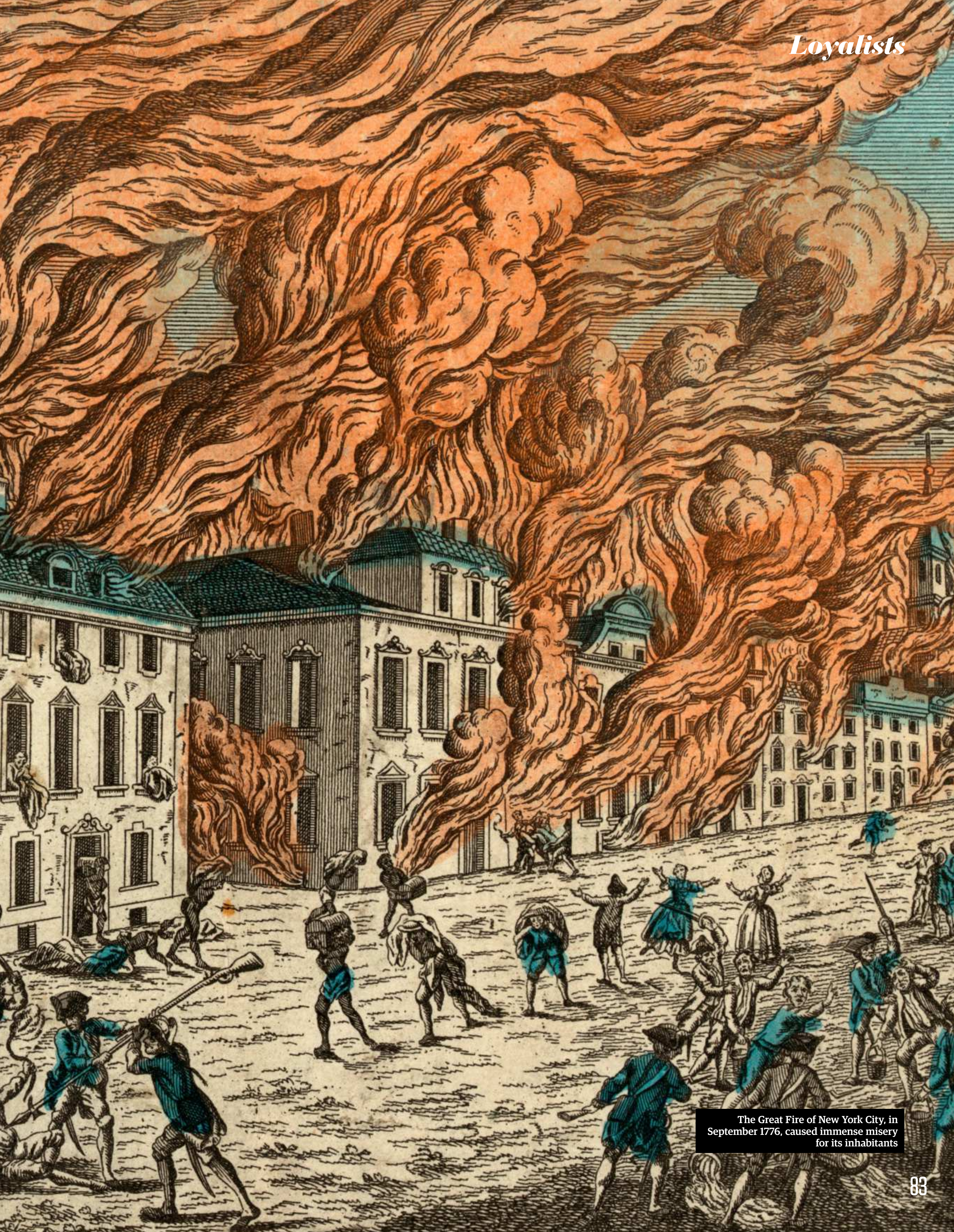
One of the most prominent of American Loyalists was Benedict Arnold. Arnold had initially served as a Patriot general and had fought bravely on behalf of the rebellion at the Battle of Saratoga in September-October 1777. He grew disenchanted with the Patriots after being passed over for promotion and on account of other grievances. He married a Philadelphia woman from a prominent Loyalist family and then switched his allegiance to the King, attempting and failing to betray West Point to the British. Now in open service to the Crown, Arnold found his way to New York City where he purchased a house on Broadway. He also formed a Loyalist regiment, known as the American Legion, on Long Island in 1780.

Generally, despite the good performance of some Loyalist units, they were never used to their full potential. Many formations were also too small to be of much value in the field, and were compelled to serve as garrison units, especially in New York City, thereby greatly lessening their effectiveness in suppressing the rebellion.

The suffering city

Conditions inside New York City, once the British had cleared it of rebels and taken complete





The Great Fire of New York City, in September 1776, caused immense misery for its inhabitants

> "Loyalists were not unquestionably obedient subjects of the Crown. They wanted their voices to be heard"

possession of it, proved less than ideal for its civilian inhabitants. Without doubt, the major factor in establishing New York as a redoubt of loyalism in America was its control by British troops. This had the effect of lending protection to Loyalists already in the city, and also acted to attract Loyalists from other parts where the rebellion was stronger. Those with sympathies for the Crown sought out the protection of the King in this stronghold. An estimate has the population of New York as just 5,000 when General William Howe restored it to Crown control in 1776. In February 1777, the city's civilian population had grown to 11,000. In 1781, it stood at 25,000, and at the end of the war, in 1783, some 33,000 would call New York home.

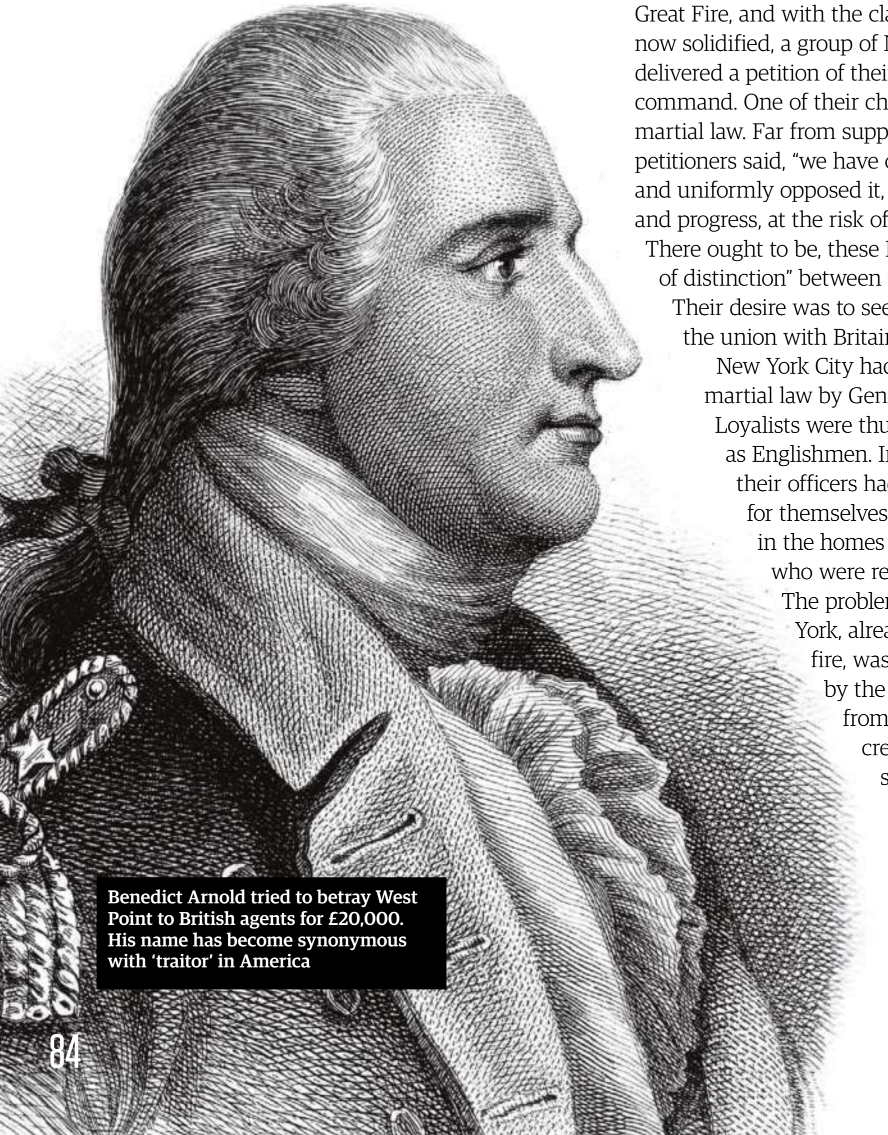
But even though they were loyal, this did not mean that the Loyalists did not share at least some of the same misgivings about royal policies as the Patriots. Taxation was a major grievance, and many Loyalists desired more local political control. New Yorkers also had a history of opposing the quartering of royal troops, and there had even been clashes between soldiers and civilians in Manhattan before the war in 1770. Loyalists were not unquestioningly obedient subjects of the Crown. They wanted their voices to be heard, and their concerns to be addressed. In that regard, they were no so different from their Patriot countrymen. They refused, however, to make a total break with the King.

The Great Fire

One of the foremost causes of anguish for the inhabitants of New York City was the Great Fire that wreaked havoc on the city not long after its capture. It began on the night of 20-21 September 1776, probably as an accidental tavern fire. Though many Loyalists insisted that it was started by Patriots, there is no evidence for this. Whatever its origin, the fire wrecked close to 500 homes. This only added to the problem of crowding in the city, as the dispossessed competed for shelter with the thousands of redcoats now resident within it.

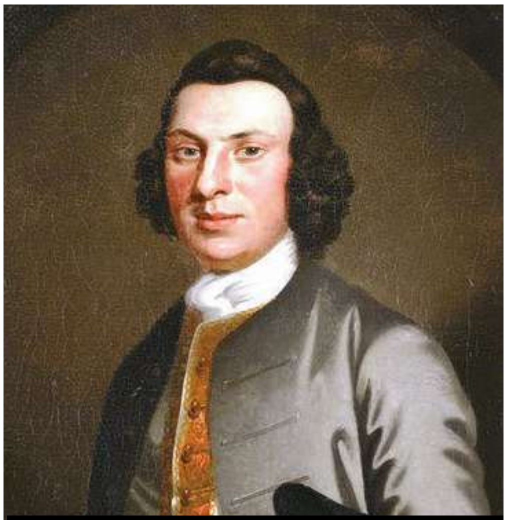
In the autumn of 1776, after the miseries of the Great Fire, and with the clamourous occupation now solidified, a group of New York Loyalists delivered a petition of their grievances to the British command. One of their chief complaints was about martial law. Far from supporting rebellion, the petitioners said, "we have on the contrary, steadily and uniformly opposed it, in every stage of its rise and progress, at the risk of our lives and fortunes". There ought to be, these Loyalists argued, a "line of distinction" between them and the rebels. Their desire was to see a "speedy restoration" of the union with Britain.

New York City had been placed under martial law by General Howe, and the Loyalists were thus deprived of their rights as Englishmen. In another irony, after their officers had taken the best homes for themselves, redcoats were quartered in the homes of private individuals who were required to feed them too. The problem of housing in New York, already acute because of the fire, was further exacerbated by the arrival of refugees from other places. One ugly creation of the Loyalist surge in New York was 'Canvas Town', a cesspit of a refugee camp set up by the homeless in and among the burned-out remains of the city's fire-ravaged west side.

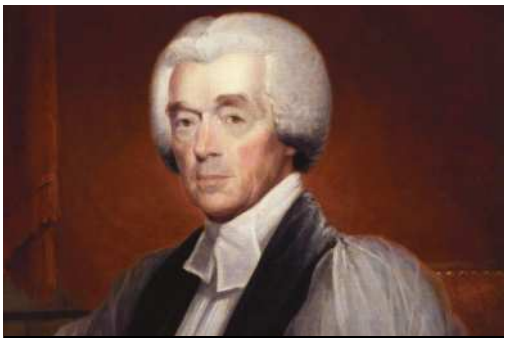


Benedict Arnold tried to betray West Point to British agents for £20,000. His name has become synonymous with 'traitor' in America

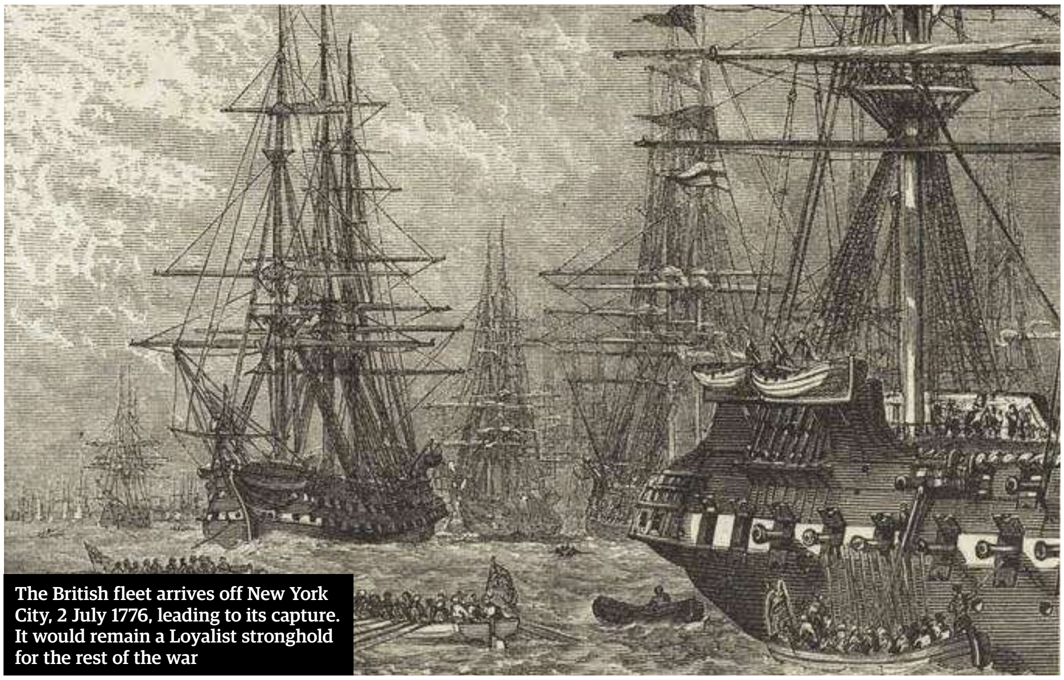
In November 1776, the Loyalist petition was left open for signature for three days at Scott's Tavern on Wall Street. Over 700 people would affix their signatures to this 'declaration of dependence'. These Loyalists were not merely the wealthy and powerful, but were, like the Patriots themselves, a cross-section of American society. The large and prominent merchant class was also critical in sustaining a loyal attitude towards the King in New York. Success within the mighty imperial framework of Britain was attractive to many such men, who could see their city becoming a future centre of the empire. Over 50 per cent of New York's Chamber of Commerce in 1775 were dedicated Loyalists. In the meanwhile, inflation spiralled out of control, with rents increasing some 300 per cent over the prices in effect before the war. Sanitation became an intractable problem, and crime surged. Not least among the criminals were the redcoats, who helped themselves to what their meagre pay could not purchase. They were rarely brought to justice by the British authorities.



James Madison, the 'Father of the Constitution', was also a principal author of the Federalist Papers



John Jay, one of three authors of the Federalist Papers, was the first Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court



The British fleet arrives off New York City, 2 July 1776, leading to its capture. It would remain a Loyalist stronghold for the rest of the war

The failure of loyalism

Loyalism in the Thirteen Colonies was, in the end, unsuccessful. It could not sustain itself in areas where British arms could not guarantee the safety of those loyal to the Crown. Perhaps one-fifth or so of the wartime colonial population of around 2.5 million were loyal, but Loyalists were generally outnumbered in every locality besides New York. The rebels controlled the sheriff's offices, the courts, and all the other levers of governmental power, putting the Loyalists in the Colonies at a deep disadvantage.

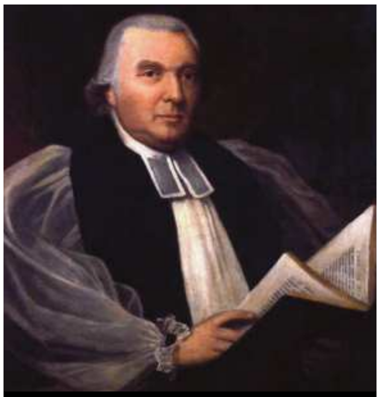
The lack of determined action on the part of too many British commanders was also damaging to the King's cause. General Henry Clinton dithered as General John Burgoyne attempted to move south from Canada into northern New York, failing to support him, thus resulting in a terrible defeat for British arms at Saratoga in 1777. Clinton succeeded General Howe as commander-in-chief of British forces in New York in 1778, but proved less than ferocious in prosecuting the war. He enjoyed the charms of New York a bit too much, especially the Theater Royal, whose troupe became known as Clinton's Players.

Loyalists could be found in other parts of America, but they felt emboldened to emerge from the shadows only when British forces were present in large numbers, though Burgoyne himself would be deeply disappointed in the level of support he received from local Loyalists in the Saratoga campaign in northern New York, one of the war's most crucial. His belief that Loyalists were eager to join him and fight for the Crown was ill-founded. Elsewhere, in the American South, after the fall of Charleston, South Carolina to Clinton's forces in May 1780, Loyalists there formed several companies of volunteer troops. These were not enough to ensure victory, however. Southern Loyalists would fight hard against their Patriot antagonists at the Battle of Kings Mountain in 1780, but were defeated.

The British defeat at Yorktown in 1781 ended the shooting war, and the 1783 decision by London to recognise the independence of the United States took the Loyalists of New York by surprise, and made them anxious as to what their lives would be like under the victorious Patriot government.

While many Loyalists would remain behind, about 60,000 Americans from all parts of the former colonies packed up and departed after the King gave up his claim to America. Some 15,000 of their slaves were made to go with them too. A major evacuation departed New York City on 25 November 1783. The destinations of the Loyalists revealed the worldwide extent of the Empire, and perhaps why so few could have envisioned a rebel victory over such a large and powerful entity. Loyalist Americans dispersed to Britain, Canada, Jamaica, Ireland, India and other places, and everywhere integrated themselves into their new environs.

After the war, they were acclaimed as 'United Empire Loyalists' by the Crown, and once abroad, many sought compensation for all they had lost in leaving the American colonies as a consequence of their loyalty to the King. The number of demands for redress was so great that in July 1783, the British government established the American Loyalist Claims Commission. The task of the Commission was to sift through all of the petitions made by the Loyalist refugees for restitution. Over 5,000 Loyalists would advance claims for lost property, and the Commission would eventually fully study 3,225 claims. The Loyalist claimants would eventually be granted £3,033,091 out of total claims of £10,358,413.



Anglican priest and committed Loyalist Samuel Seabury wrote *Letters of a Westchester Farmer* in 1774-75

A font of loyalism

Loyalty to the Church of England also meant loyalty to its head – King George III

The Anglican religion was an important factor in determining loyalty to the British monarchy during the American Revolutionary War. Wherever Anglicanism was strong, such as in New York, or the surrounding counties of Westchester or Queens, so too was loyal feeling. The rebellion was called by such Loyalists a "Presbyterian War", and the rebels were castigated as "Oliverians", reflecting unhealed wounds left over from the British Civil Wars of the mid-17th century.

In the Church of England, the monarch, King George III, was the head of the church. For some, therefore, loyalism was not merely a political choice, but also a religious duty. A prime example of this deep and abiding feeling was Charles Inglis, an Anglican cleric in New York City, and the rector of Trinity Church. At the end of the war, he went in exile to Nova Scotia, and with him also took his entire congregation of 2,000 people. The English constitution, Inglis declared, was the "best political fabric that ever existed." He was devoted to his king, and thought that "a separation of the colonies from the parent State must be highly injurious perhaps ruinous to both countries". Inglis would eventually be appointed the first ever Anglican bishop of Nova Scotia.

New York had been a stronghold of the Church of England since long before the Revolution. Four of the counties in the area – New York itself, Queens, Westchester, and Richmond – had an Anglican church establishment, making it unique in this regard in the northern colonies. New York became the leading refuge for Anglicans in the colonies. After the British takeover in 1776, so many Loyalists had sought shelter there that the Anglican churches within the city were unable to cope with the arrival of so many new congregants, and so City Hall was opened for church services.

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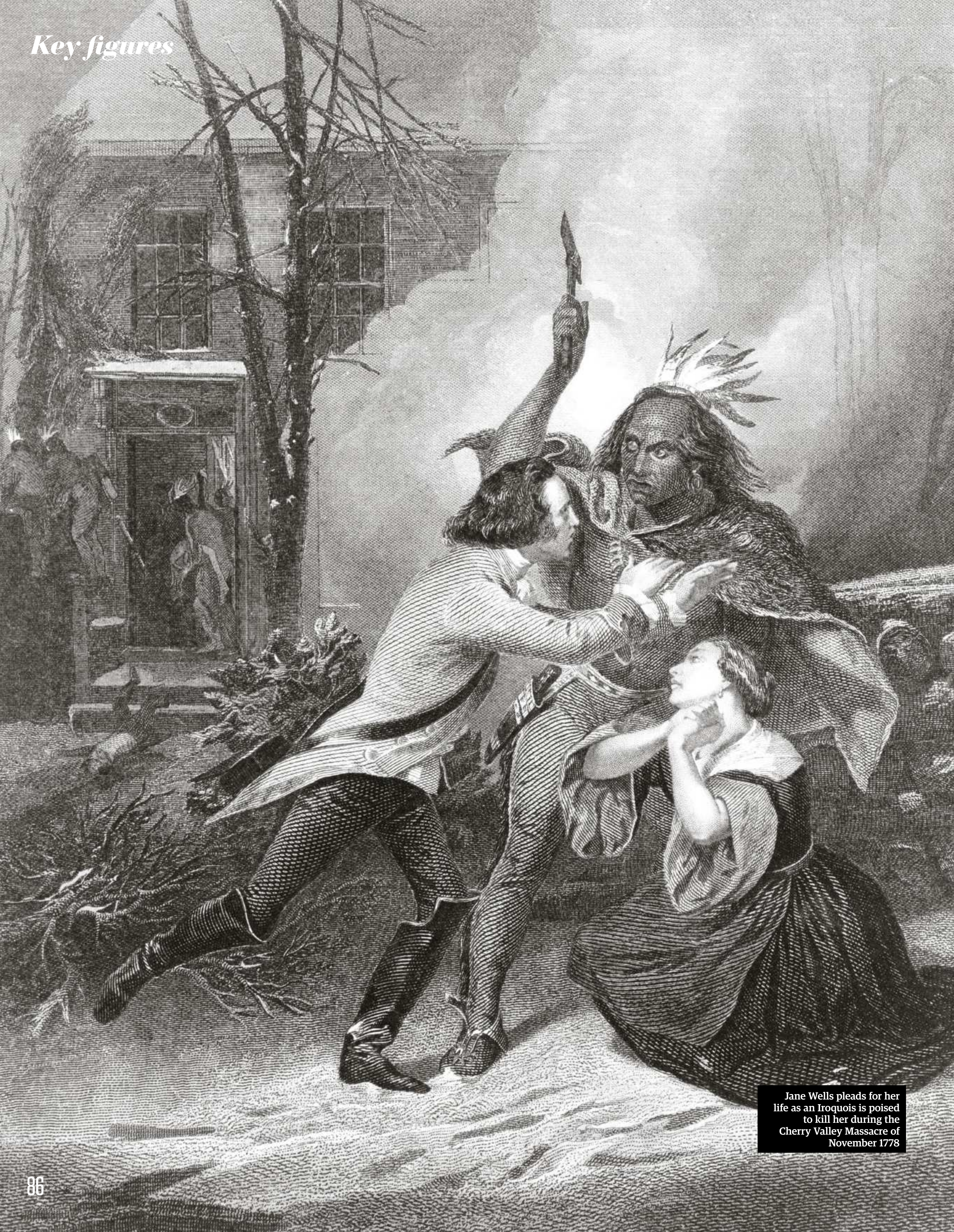
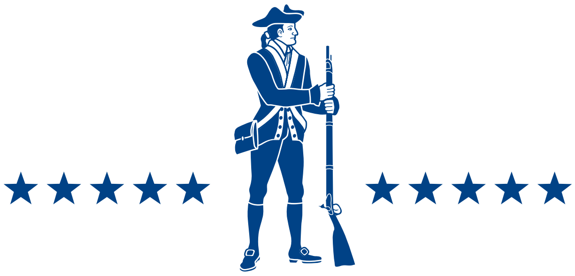


Jane Wells pleads for her life as an Iroquois is poised to kill her during the Cherry Valley Massacre of November 1778



The Native American revolutionary experience

The outbreak of the American Revolution inevitably brought the Native American tribes into the conflict and hastened their loss of lands and status

With the end of the French and Indian War, the British Crown published the Royal Proclamation of 1763, ensuring that the colonial encroachment on Native American lands would be halted at the Allegheny Mountains. All territory west of the peaks would remain in Indian possession.

The measure was intended to placate the Indians and came in the midst of a violent uprising by the Ottawa tribe under Chief Pontiac along with the Seneca and Delaware in the Great Lakes region. Enraged that the British had continued to build on their lands and irked that sufficient gifts had not been rendered to assure the good intentions of the Europeans, the Indians burned British forts and wrecked settlements, sparing only Detroit, Fort Pitt and Fort Niagara.

> American militia massacred 96 Delaware Indians, who were Christians of the Moravian faith, at Gnadenhutten, Ohio

In the terms of the proclamation, colonists were further forbidden from purchasing land west of the mountain line or entering into any agreements with the Indians. Only licensed traders were allowed westward. Ostensibly, the measure was intended to protect the colonists from Indian attacks and conversely to protect Indian lands from an avalanche of land speculators and settlers.

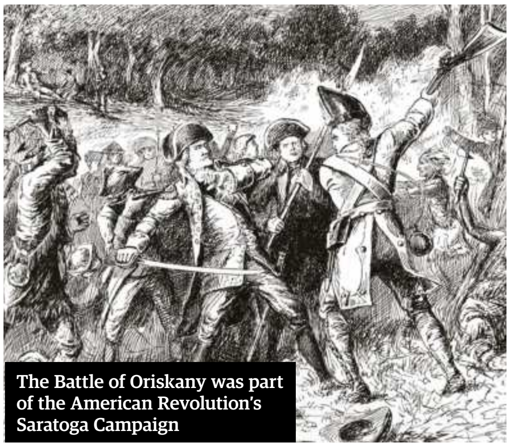
From the beginning, an edict that would stem the westward tide of colonial settlement and land speculation in North America was wishful thinking, and the Native American position was steadily growing more precarious. With the ejection of the French from North America, they were no longer able to preserve their own interests while playing major European powers against one another as they vied for Indian cooperation.

Since the mid-1750s, the crown had appointed commissioners in the Northern and Southern colonies to see to the administration of Indian issues, and the proclamation, although intended as a temporary measure, soon became more evidence to colonial leaders of London's overreach in North American affairs.

© Getty, Alamy

The British understood that as unrest fomented in the colonies the Indians might become valuable allies. Despite their earlier conduct, they assured them that once the rebellion was quelled their lands and their way of life would be protected. When war came, however, the great Indian nations were in a quandary. For those in the West, the British were obviously stronger militarily than the colonists, and the Americans seemed more of an immediate threat than any malevolent intentions of the far-off King George III. However, by the time of the revolution, many of the coastal tribes had lived among the Americans for 150 years. They had become involved in the colonial economy, intermarried, and many had otherwise assimilated in the new way of life.

The real beginning of trouble for the Native Americans occurred in 1774 with Lord Dunmore's War. Asserting territorial claims to the west and northwest in the colony's charter, Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia, crossed the Alleghenies as far as Western Pennsylvania, sparking a war with the Shawnee and Delaware, while the six nations of the Iroquois Confederacy, the Tuscarora, Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Mohawk, and Oneida, watched anxiously. Negotiations with the British superintendents of Indian Affairs, Sir William Johnson and Guy Johnson, and the assistance of Joseph Brant, a Mohawk leader educated in Connecticut at Eleazar Wheelock's Indian School, persuaded the Iroquois to remain at peace and brought the Virginians and Shawnee to the negotiating table. Brant's sister, Molly, was the wife of William Johnson.


The Battle of Oriskany was part of the American Revolution's Saratoga Campaign

In the same year, Parliament passed the Quebec Act, which extended the boundaries of the Proclamation of 1763, giving jurisdiction over all lands from the Ohio to the Mississippi River to the Quebec government and widening the boundaries of Quebec from Hudson Bay in the north to the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi in the west and south. The American colonists again saw the action as detrimental to their interests, and the measure contributed significantly to the outbreak of the revolution and subsequent invasion of Quebec by colonial troops in 1775.

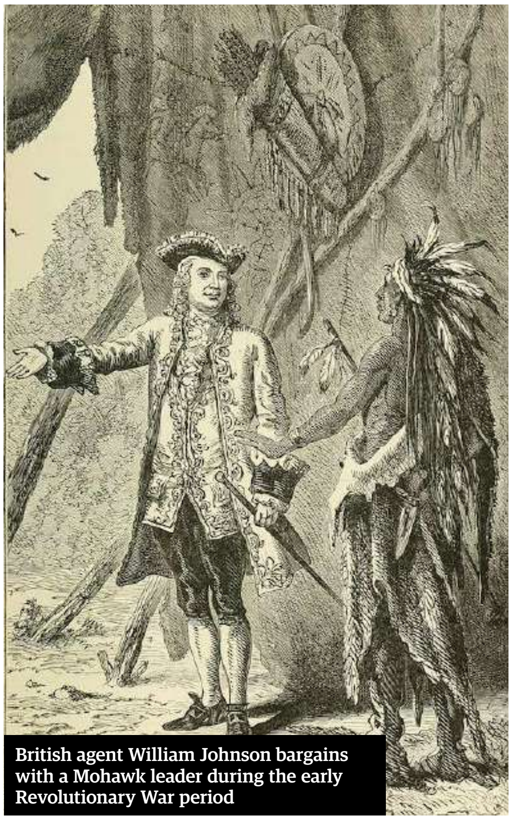
In 1794, General Anthony Wayne defeated the Indians of the northwest region at the Battle of Fallen Timbers

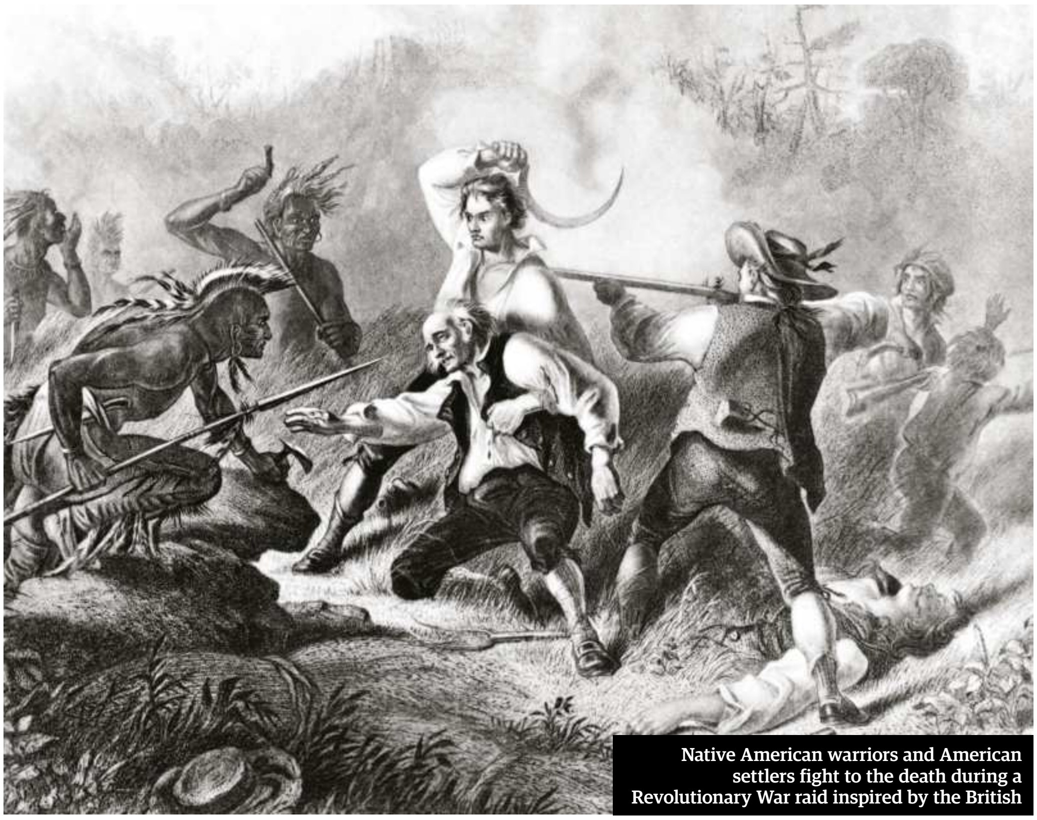
When war came, initially neither side actively courted the support of armed Native Americans. British agent Guy Johnson explained the Boston Tea Party to the Iroquois saying, "This dispute was solely occasioned by some people, who not withstanding a law of the King and his wise Men, would not let some Tea land, but destroyed it, on which he was angry, and sent some troops with the General (Thomas Gage), whom you have long known, to see the Laws executed and bring the people to their senses, and as he is proceeding with great wisdom, to shew [sic] them their great mistake, I expect it will soon be over."

In the summer of 1775, the Second Continental Congress issued a statement for its commissioners to the Native Americans to announce. "This is a family quarrel between us and Old England. We do not wish you to take up the hatchet against the king's troops. We desire you to remain at home, and not join either side, but keep the hatchet buried deep."

More than a year passed before either side attempted to entice the Indians to take up arms. Further, there is little evidence that the British had previously sought to stir up anti-colonial sentiment or encouraged the Indians to raid colonial settlements. Nevertheless, among the grievances against the Crown that Thomas Jefferson listed in the Declaration of Independence, approved by the Continental Congress, was an indictment of King George III for doing just that.

"He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages whose known rule of warfare,


British agent William Johnson bargains with a Mohawk leader during the early Revolutionary War period

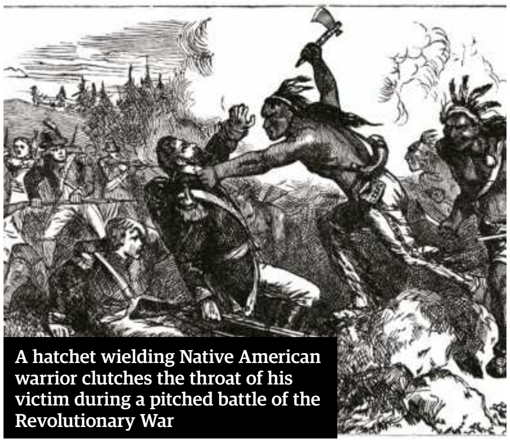

Native American warriors and American settlers fight to the death during a Revolutionary War raid inspired by the British

is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions," wrote Jefferson. With this statement, the colonists potentially alienated every Native American. Still, the majority of the Indians attempted to remain neutral during the revolution, and when they did eventually choose sides they were fighting as much for their own continuing independence as for any notion of support for George III or a new colonial national identity. It was apparent that their lands were at stake and that their very way of life was threatened. Ultimately, both the British and the colonists sought the support of Native Americans.

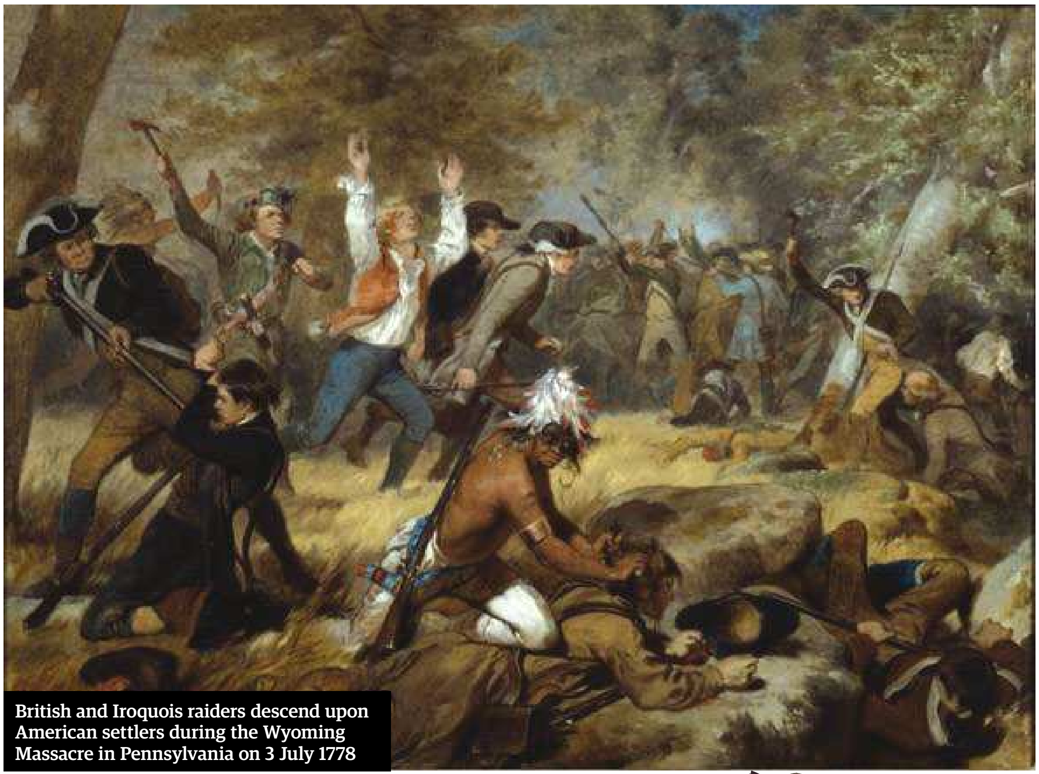
The revolution fractured the Iroquois Confederacy as Guy Johnson and Joseph Brant returned from a visit to London in the summer of 1776. Both worked to convince the nations of the Confederacy to join the British in the fighting, and to stoke Native American enmity toward the colonists, the British invited them to "feast on a Bostonian and drink his Blood." The split came during the Great Congress at Irondequoit a year later. The British lavished gifts of rum, foodstuffs and trinkets on the delegates, and Brant was quite persuasive. Four of the nations, the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga and Mohawk, did fight for the British; however, most of the Oneida and Tuscarora did not. The rupture was confirmed in blood at the Battle of Oriskany during the Saratoga campaign on 6 August 1777, as the British and their Seneca allies fought Americans allied with Oneida and Tuscarora warriors. The Seneca lost 17 killed and 16 wounded; overall 33 Native Americans died and 29 were wounded. Days later the former 'brothers' clashed again at the Battle of Freeman's Farm.

The main British force in the Saratoga campaign was commanded by General John Burgoyne, and Indians under his charge murdered a young white female, further enraging rebel sentiment against them. The Iroquois mounted British-sponsored raids on colonial settlements, and in response General John Sullivan led an expedition that burned Iroquois towns to the ground and destroyed provisions. When the war was over, many of the Indians who had sided with the British migrated north of the Canadian border, seeking the protection of their benefactors rather than enduring the harshness of a vengeful American government.

The memory of the bitter wartime experience was etched in the minds of the Iroquois for


A hatchet wielding Native American warrior clutches the throat of his victim during a pitched battle of the Revolutionary War

> "It was apparent that their lands were at stake"

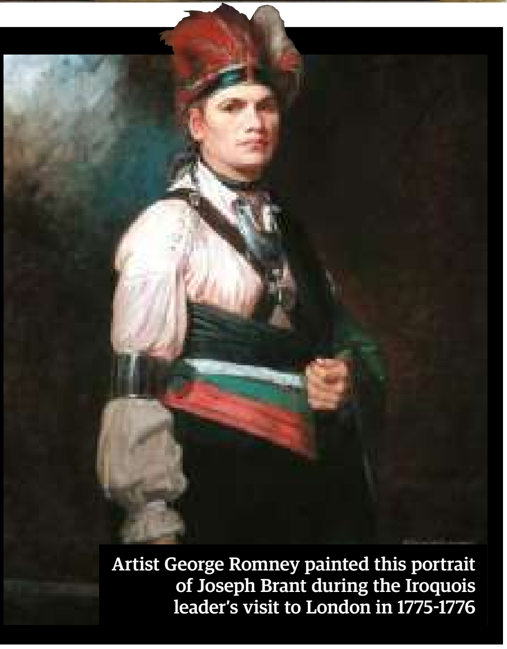

British and Iroquois raiders descend upon American settlers during the Wyoming Massacre in Pennsylvania on 3 July 1778

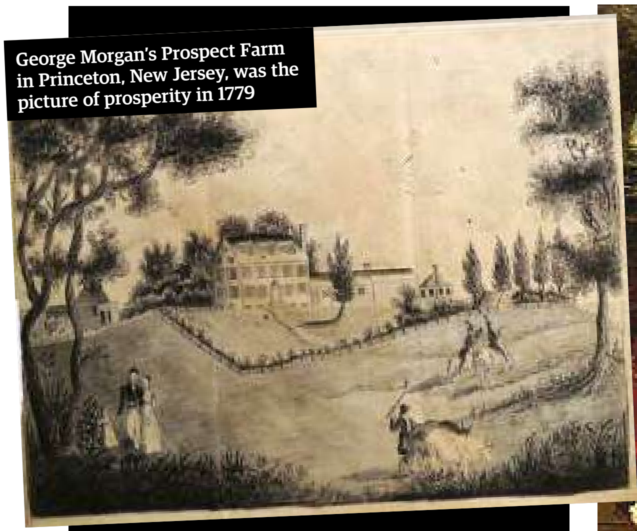
Mohawk Joseph Brant

Born Thayendanegea, Mohawk leader Joseph Brant was already prominent among the Iroquois Confederacy and the Europeans when he travelled to Britain in 1775. He had grown up surrounded by Native American and European cultures and was educated in a school that was the forerunner of Dartmouth College. During the French and Indian War, he fought with the British. His family became allied with that of British commissioner William Johnson, who married Brant's sister, Molly.

On 11 November 1775, Brant set out for London with Guy Johnson, successor to his uncle William. He hoped to address Iroquois' concerns over American encroachment on Indian lands, particularly since Brant's people had fought the French in the recent war. He was received with fanfare and presented to King George III wearing traditional Mohawk garb. He became a Mason, receiving his apron from the king, along with pledges of land in Quebec in exchange for support in suppressing the rebellion. Artist George Romney painted Brant's portrait, and he returned to America convinced that the future of the Iroquois lay with the British.

On the battlefield, Brant was said to have spared the life of Captain John Wood during an attack on the colonial settlement at Minisink, New York. Wood inadvertently flashed the sign of the Master Mason as he was about to be killed, and Brant stepped in. Wood, who was not a Mason at the time, later applied for membership. Brant was wounded in action, settled in Ontario after the war, and died at the age of 64 in 1807.


Artist George Romney painted this portrait of Joseph Brant during the Iroquois leader's visit to London in 1775-1776



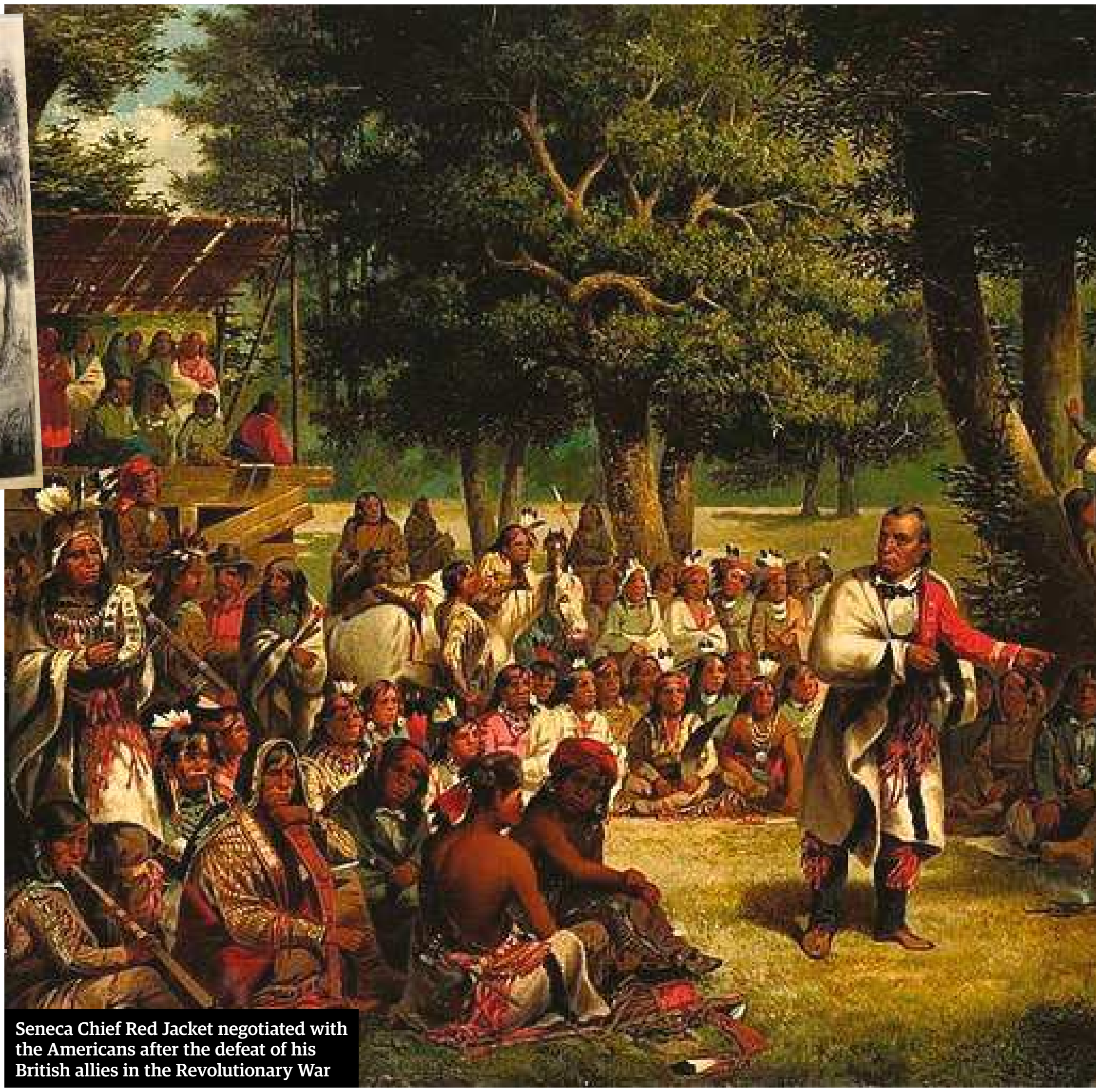
George Morgan's Prospect Farm in Princeton, New Jersey, was the picture of prosperity in 1779

The murder of White Eyes

An early advocate for his people, the Delaware, or Lenape, tribe, Chief White Eyes attempted unsuccessfully to mediate between the Shawnee and the government of Virginia prior to Lord Dunmore's War. Afterward, he negotiated to secure Delaware territory in the Ohio Country. When Dunmore was eventually ejected from Virginia, White Eyes worked to conclude an alliance with the Americans in their war for independence, becoming closely associated with government Indian agent George Morgan.

In 1776, White Eyes addressed the Continental Congress, and in 1778 a treaty between the Delaware and the fledgling United States seemed to assure that the Delaware would have a future if the colonists won their independence. The treaty provided that the Delaware would occupy an actual 'state' and receive representation in Congress, while the Delaware were to provide scouts for the rebels and even serve in the militia or Continental Army. Two years later, White Eyes joined an expedition led by General Lachlan McIntosh against the British at Detroit. During the expedition, American officials reported, White Eyes contracted smallpox and died.

Sometime afterward, Morgan wrote to Congress of a cover-up, asserting that White Eyes had actually been "treacherously put to death" by militiamen. According to later documentation, an American officer had killed him on 5 November 1778. Efforts to maintain the alliance with the Delaware were ultimately fruitless, and they joined other tribes on the British side. Morgan raised White Eyes' son, George Morgan White Eyes, and the Continental Congress paid for his education at the College of New Jersey, which became Princeton University.



Seneca Chief Red Jacket negotiated with the Americans after the defeat of his British allies in the Revolutionary War

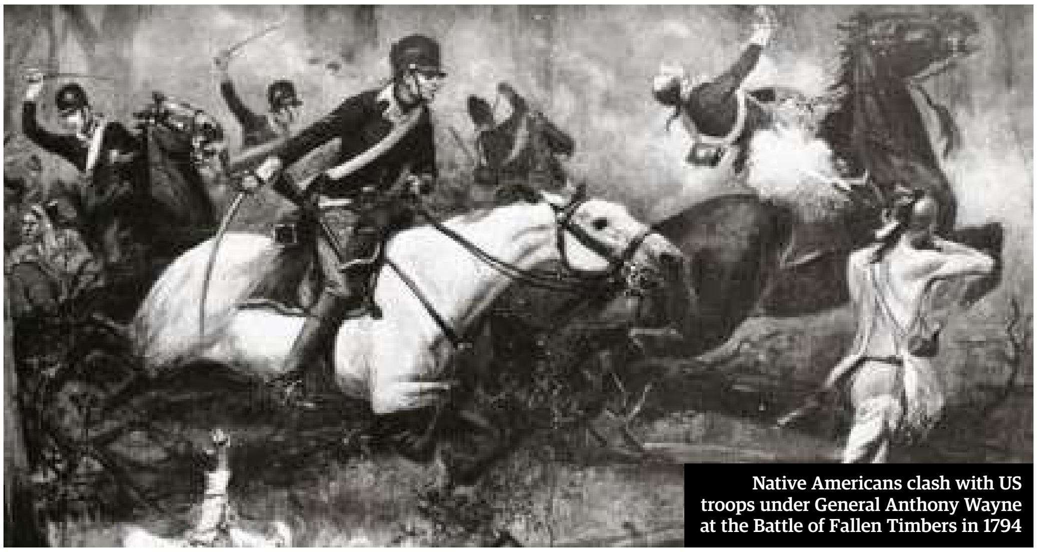
"For the Native Americans, the consequences of the Revolutionary War were devastating"

generations. When Chief Cornplanter of the Seneca visited President George Washington in 1790, he remarked, "When your army entered the country of the six nations, we called you Town Destroyer; and to this day when the name is heard our women look behind them and turn pale, and our children cling close to the necks of their mothers."

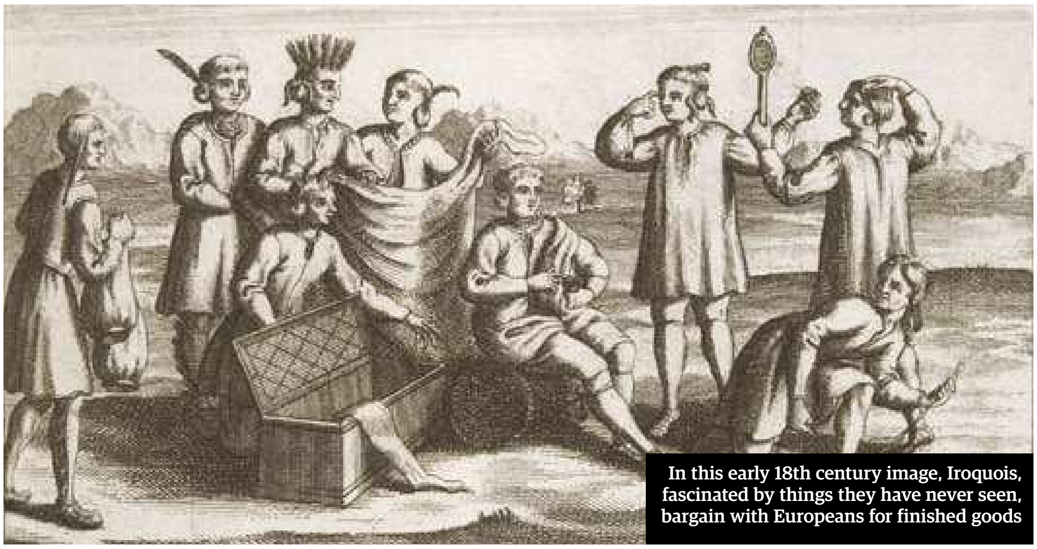
In the South, the Cherokee were inclined to support the British. The terms of the Treaty of Sycamore Shoals had transferred to the land speculators of the Transylvania Company title to large tracts in present-day Kentucky and Tennessee in 1775, but disaffected Cherokee refused to accede to the treaty and vowed that attempts to settle the country would lead to war.

The outbreak of the revolution inspired an uprising among the Cherokee, who were influenced by a delegation of Native Americans from the North in 1776, urging them to take up arms against the rebels. The Cherokee raided settlements and burned homes without the direct support of the British Army. The Americans sent punitive expeditions against Cherokee towns, retaliating and forcing the Indians to accept peace terms. Dragging Canoe and the Chickamauga, however, refused to yield. Moving westward and erecting new towns along the Tennessee River, the Chickamauga continued to fight – well beyond the end of the revolution. Such resistance was the beginning of the end for the Cherokee. Their towns were devastated and in the decades to come the majority of them were rounded up and force-marched hundreds of miles to the west along a route of starvation and disease called the 'Trail of Tears'.

In stark contrast to the Cherokee experience, the Stockbridge tribe of Massachusetts embraced the American cause. The Stockbridge were a



Native Americans clash with US troops under General Anthony Wayne at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794



In this early 18th century image, Iroquois, fascinated by things they have never seen, bargain with Europeans for finished goods

concentration of the Mohican tribe, traditional enemies of the Mohawk, who had originally settled in the Hudson Valley of New York. Many Mohican later relocated to the southeast near the town of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and were converted to Christianity. A full company of Stockbridge volunteers was raised to serve with the Continental Army, acting as infantrymen and scouts. They were commended by General Washington for their contribution and were present during the siege of Boston, the Saratoga campaign, and the Battle of Monmouth.

The vast interior of North America, including the Ohio River Valley and the lands east of the Mississippi, was home to the Shawnee, Delaware, and other tribes. They had migrated there from the East as settlers had continued to move onto their ancestral lands and established trading partnerships while raising crops and hunting the plentiful game. The rivalry between the Americans and the British, principally Henry Hamilton, the lieutenant governor of Quebec and ranking representative of the Crown at Detroit, and George Morgan, a land speculator and merchant appointed American agent for Indian Affairs involved the Native Americans.

Chief Cornstalk of the Shawnee had fought against Lord Dunmore in 1774, but his later perspective was one of neutrality. Still, his past became his undoing after Virginia militiamen seized him under a flag of truce and murdered him in 1777. Cornstalk's own sister, Nonhelema, worked with the Americans, fighting against colonial expeditions, raiding frontier settlements and defending against raids. Likewise, the Delaware hesitated to make war on the Americans.

Tragically, the Delaware Chief White Eyes was murdered, and his people joined the British as well. White Eyes had previously negotiated the Treaty of Fort Pitt with the Second Continental Congress, but its fruits were wasted with his senseless killing.

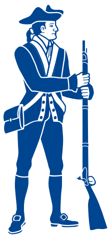
> The Southern Chickasaw and Choctaw tribes fought with the British during the revolution and sought a negotiated peace

After the revolution, the Delaware and Shawnee moved westward, away from the growing threat of American settlement in the Ohio Country. Some of them made their homes in present-day Missouri, a territory that was at least temporarily claimed by Spain, while a large concentration of the Native American population in the interior of the continent was located in the northwest of the region.

When France, the United States and Great Britain undertook peace talks in Paris in 1782, the interests of the Native Americans were put aside. Daniel Claus, the British agent for the Iroquois Confederacy, was shocked that his country's lead negotiator was at best indifferent to their plight, while Lord Walsingham, condemned the position stating, "Our treaties with them were solemn and ought to have been binding on our honour."

Conversely, while some American leaders were genuinely concerned with the treatment of the Indians, others asserted that the Native Americans were conquered peoples who had sided with their enemy during the Revolutionary War and should, therefore, be treated as such.

For the Native Americans, the consequences of the Revolutionary War were devastating.



The USA's Founding Mothers

From negotiating peace treaties to shooting at the British, these women had a unique part to play in the War of Independence

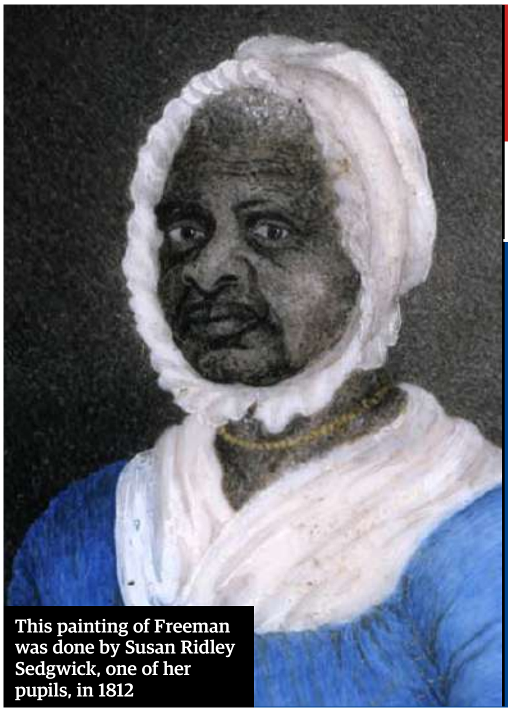
They say history is written by the winners, and the heroic victories of the American rebels against the British colonists have certainly been well documented. It was a hard won battle, and rightly holds a place in the story of the U.S.

But for every great man, there is an equally great woman, whose actions to help - or hinder - the American Revolution are frequently left out of the spotlight and pages of the history books. At the time of the revolution, women were largely confined to the home, socialising with genteel company and raising children - watching the war from the sidelines. Their husbands, brothers and fathers returned with epic tales of danger and destruction.

The Declaration of Independence is telling of contemporary attitudes towards women. "All men are created equal", it says, omitting the female gender entirely. Keeping women out of politics was of paramount importance to a number of the Founding Fathers, who believed that women lacked the intelligence and integrity to conduct the serious business of government. John Adams even stated "we know better than to repeal our masculine systems", intending to keep women firmly in their place within society.

But finding ever more ingenious and inventive ways to ensure that their voices were heard, many women played a significant part in the revolution anyway. They boycotted British goods and taxes, or followed the army into battle as cooks, nurses and water carriers.

Some women even went to exceptional lengths, and defied the gender norms to show their dedication to the cause. Radical women threw themselves into politics and war, whether the Founding Fathers liked it or not. Women from across the nation - regardless of their ethnicity, social status, wealth, or region - threw off their shackles, aprons and fears. In their eyes, they had very important work to do, and that was gaining liberty for both themselves and the fledgling United States of America.



This painting of Freeman was done by Susan Ridley Sedgwick, one of her pupils, in 1812

Elizabeth Freeman

c1742–1829

This maltreated slave used the climate of the revolution to emancipate herself from bondage

While the Founding Fathers were fighting to achieve freedom for their nation, Elizabeth Freeman (once known as Bet) was simply fighting for her own. Born into slavery in Massachusetts, the family she worked for were abusive. When they tried to attack her child with a heated shovel in 1780, Bet dived in front, receiving a deep scar to the arm. As proof of her cruel treatment, she left the wound uncovered, for all the world to see.

It's said that when she heard the words "all men are created free and equal" when the new US Constitution was being read in her master's home, Bet decided to escape slavery once and for all. With the help of Theodore Sedgwick, an abolitionist, she took her case to the Massachusetts Supreme Court in 1781.

The jury ruled in Bet's favour, and her case set an important precedent - slavery was abolished in the state of Massachusetts. She also became the first woman to be emancipated there. As a symbol of her hard-won status, Bet changed her name to Elizabeth Freeman. She worked in Sedgwick's home as a governess, before buying a house for herself and her daughter, then becoming a midwife. She died a well-respected and valued pillar of her community in 1829.

Abigail was also the mother of John Quincy Adams, president of the United States from 1825-1829

Abigail Adams

1744–1818

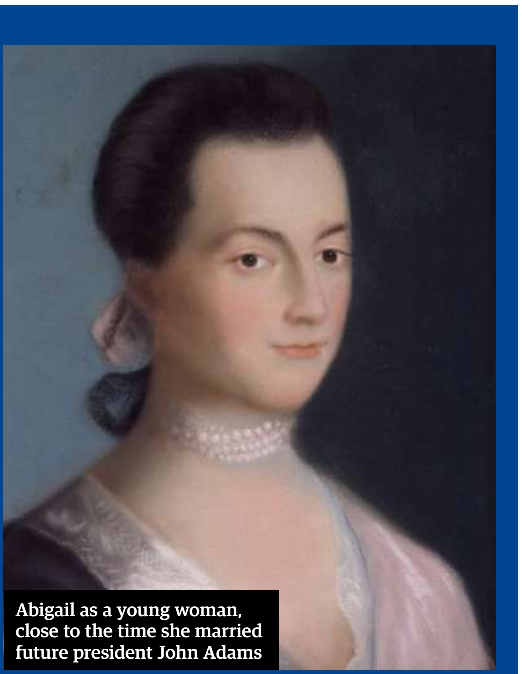
Adams was an early supporter of women's rights, and set her husband on the path to the presidency

Abigail Adams was no ordinary First Lady. A witty, wealthy and intelligent young woman, Abigail was not someone to be trifled with. When she decided to marry John Adams, a lawyer with poor prospects, that was that - regardless of what her father said.

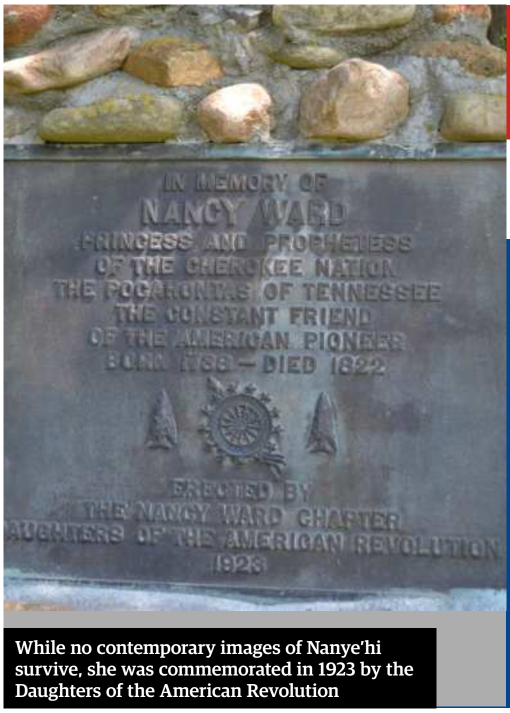
When her husband rebelled against the British, Abigail took the reins of his career, managing his finances and schedule. Her letters to him reveal her sharp mind and fervent support for the revolution. In 1776, as the Continental Congress came together, she implored him to "remember the ladies" in drafting a new Constitution. John laughed at this suggestion and dubbed female agency as the "despotism of the petticoat", but Abigail was determined.

When John was elected to the USA's highest office in 1797, she found herself in a position of unprecedented influence. Never content to simply sit pretty and look after the house, as First Lady Abigail blazed a trail for women to participate in political discussion. She championed female education and the abolition of slavery.

However, she was mocked by John's colleagues - partly because Abigail was so astute, she could see through the political manoeuvring her husband didn't, and they felt threatened. She died in 1818, leaving a legacy of fascinating letters, providing a unique female voice in the turmoil of revolution.



Abigail as a young woman, close to the time she married future president John Adams



While no contemporary images of Nanye'hi survive, she was commemorated in 1923 by the Daughters of the American Revolution

Nanye'hi (Nancy Ward)

1738–1822

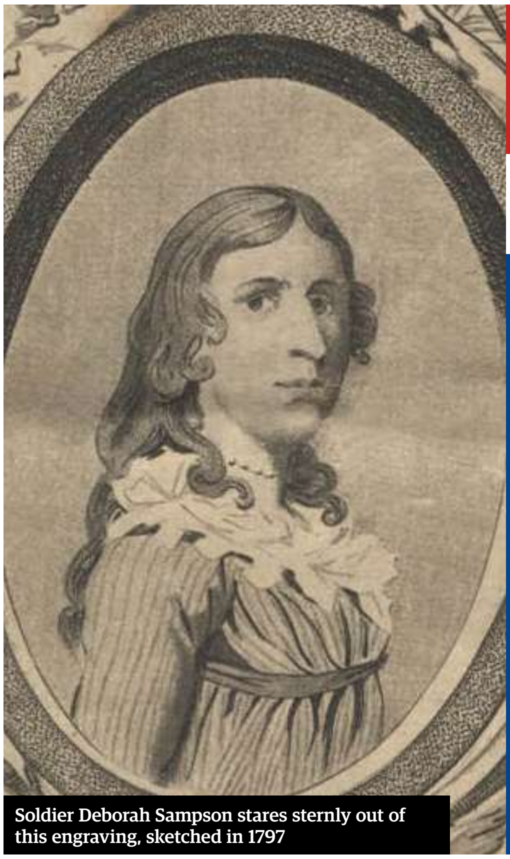
Cherokee woman Nanye'hi was beloved by both her people and white settlers

Even while American soldiers and settlers were pillaging their land, Native Americans played a key part in the American Revolution. The names of a few men have been remembered, but the contribution Native American women offered is often lost to history.

Nanye'hi - known as Nancy Ward to English speakers - was a wise woman from the Cherokee tribe. During a battle with the Creek, her husband was killed, and she took his place in the fighting. This won her a great deal of respect, and she was able to play a role in tribal councils and decisions. As tensions between white settlers and the Cherokees reached fever pitch, Nanye'hi is said to have warned the settlers of an oncoming attack in 1776. She helped to save a white woman from being burned at the stake by fellow tribesmen, so the American militias spared her village from destruction during their fight.

When the time came to make peace with the now United States in 1785, Nanye'hi made a passionate plea for mutual friendship, negotiating the Treaty of Hopewell - one of the earliest agreements between the US and the Cherokee. However, when the US purchased the lands she lived on in 1819, Nanye'hi - now an old woman - was forced to relocate.

© Getty



Soldier Deborah Sampson stares sternly out of this engraving, sketched in 1797

Deborah Sampson

1760–1827

From servant, to soldier, to speaker, Deborah Sampson had a colourful career

When the going gets tough, the tough get going. Deborah Sampson was a hard-as-nails young woman, with a taste for patriotism and a bravery that took her to the front lines of the Revolutionary War.

Sampson's family was large, and her parents were destitute. Seeing no other option, they sent some of their children to work for wealthier families as indentured servants. Ten-year-old Deborah found herself on a Massachusetts farm belonging to Benjamin Thomas, and worked hard on the fields. In her down time, she would educate herself. Soon, Sampson found her tranquil life disturbed by the campaign for independence. Throwing her lot in with the revolutionaries and binding her breasts to disguise her gender, Sampson became 'Robert Shurtleff' and enlisted in the army.

'Shurtleff' excelled, and even led a raid on the house of a British supporter, capturing 15 men. Though they applauded Shurtleff's bravery, their colleagues nicknamed Shurtleff 'Molly' because of her beardless face. For almost two years, Molly fought tirelessly, her true gender undetected.

When Deborah Sampson was exposed by a visit to the military hospital, she was honourably discharged. She was granted a full military pension, and she later toured the US, giving lectures about her experiences in the army and in the Revolutionary War.

> "Sampson became 'Robert Shurtleff' and enlisted in the army"

Ann Bates

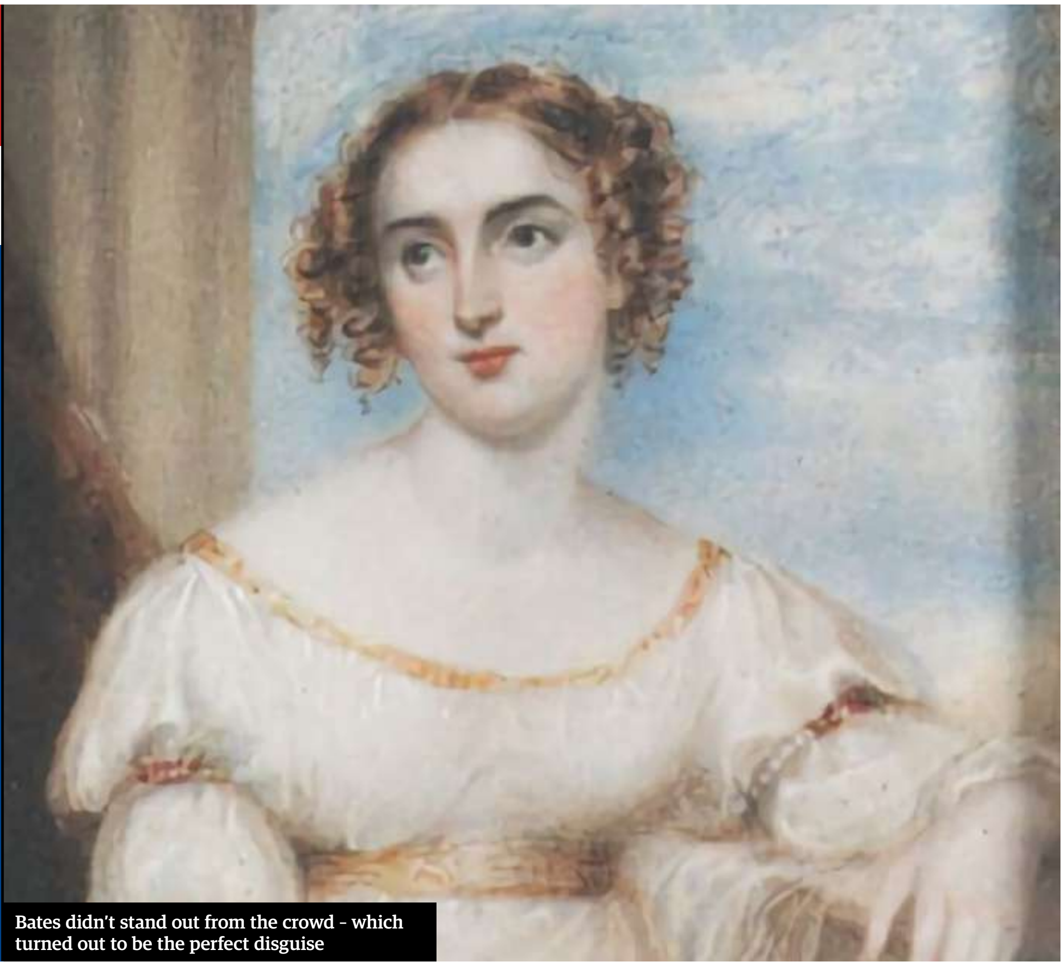
c.1748–1801

While the Founding Fathers fought for liberty, Ann Bates stood in their way

Not all women were fervent revolutionaries. Indeed, some of them actively worked against the rebels, and gave their service to the British. One such woman was the loyalist spy, Ann Bates.

A schoolteacher by trade, her husband fought in the British Army. When the British and their allies were forced to evacuate Philadelphia and head for New York, Ann went with them. Since women were widely assumed to know nothing of military technology and strategy, Bates had relatively easy access to crucial American information.

On her first mission, Bates dressed as a peddler and infiltrated George Washington's camp, relaying some of their military secrets - such as the number and position of cannons - back to the British Army. She deliberately kept a low profile to avoid exposure, and the tactic largely worked. In 1781, when it appeared her cause was lost, she migrated to England and lived the rest of her days in poverty.



Bates didn't stand out from the crowd - which turned out to be the perfect disguise

Ona Judge

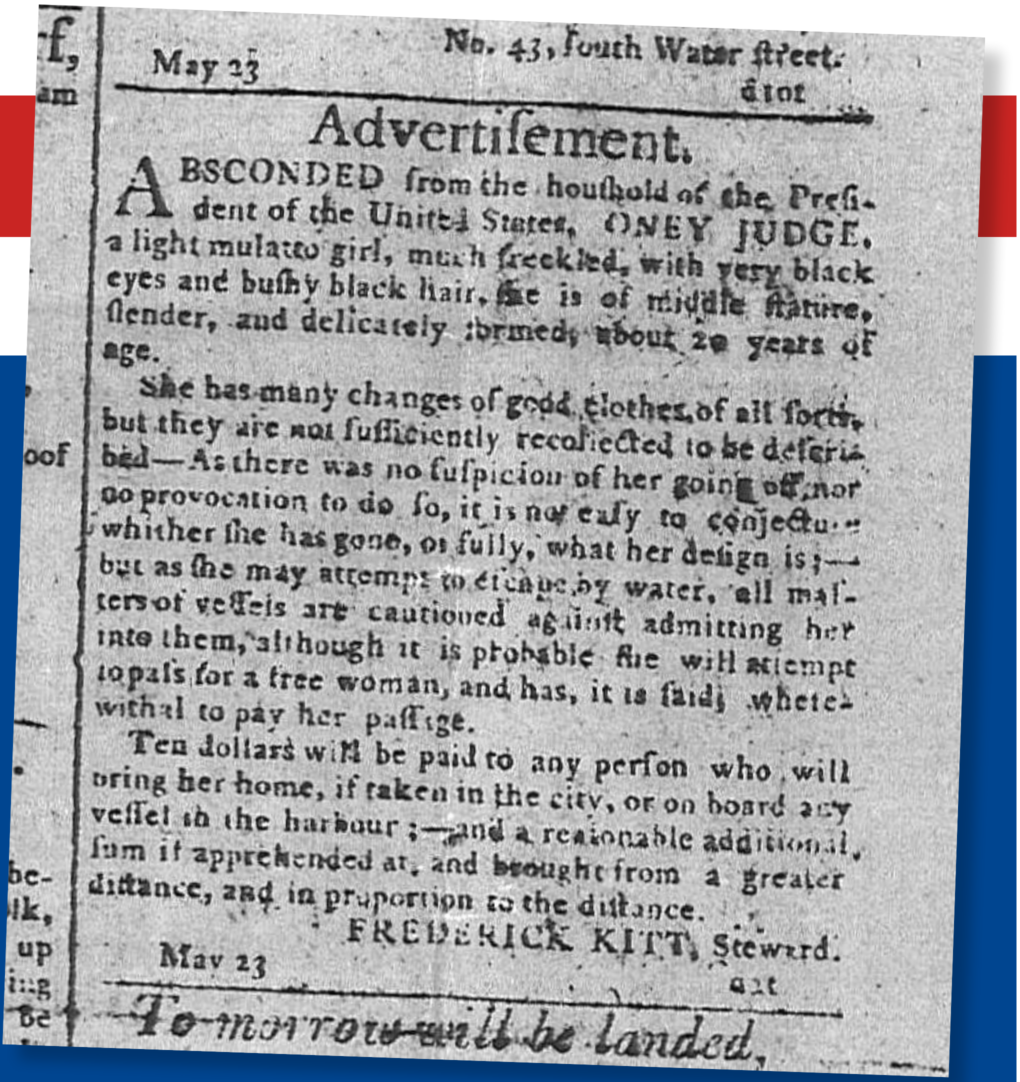
c.1773–1848

The woman who defied George Washington to live truly free

George Washington was notorious for his ownership of a slave plantation at Mount Vernon, but he was not nearly as effective a master as he was a president. In 1796, Ona 'Oney' Judge, a mixed race domestic slave, escaped from his clutches permanently as a fugitive. She simply walked out of the house as the family were eating dinner, never to be seen again.

Judge stepped onto a ship and sailed north to New Hampshire. Having been exposed to free black men and women, she knew that a better life might be found away from the president's home. However, the loss of a favourite slave was a humiliation Washington wasn't going to let go of easily, so Judge became a wanted fugitive.

Washington even sent assistants to convince her to return, but Judge was smarter than Washington gave her credit for. She attempted to bargain with them, and the president viewed this as the deepest insolence. She never did go back, but when she died she was still legally a slave - as were her children.



No. 43, ſouth Water ſtreet.
May 23 d1ot

Advertiſement.

ABSCONDED from the houſhold of the Preſident of the United States, ONEY JUDGE, a light mulatto girl, much freckled, with very black eyes and buſhy black hair, ſhe is of middle ſtature, ſlender, and delicately formed, about 20 years of age.

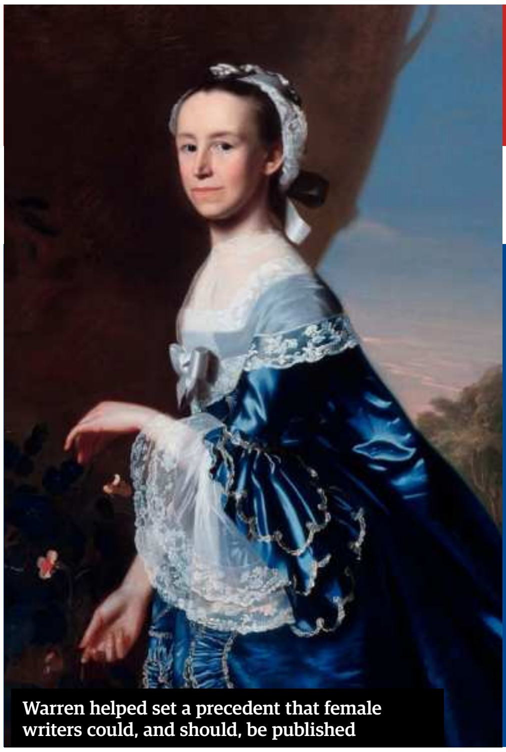
She has many changes of good clothes of all ſorts, but they are not ſufficiently recollected to be deſcribed—As there was no ſuſpicion of her going off, nor no provocation to do ſo, it is not eaſy to conjecture whither ſhe has gone, or fully, what her deſign is;—but as ſhe may attempt to eſcape by water, all maſters of veſſels are cautioned againſt admitting her into them, although it is probable ſhe will attempt to paſs for a free woman, and has, it is ſaid, wherewithal to pay her paſſage.

Ten dollars will be paid to any perſon who will bring her home, if taken in the city, or on board any veſſel in the harbour;—and a reaſonable additional ſum if apprehended at, and brought from a greater diſtance, and in proportion to the diſtance.

FREDERICK KITT, Steward.
May 23 a2t

To-morrow will be landed,

This newspaper advert offers a hefty prize of ten dollars for returning Ona to the president



Warren helped set a precedent that female writers could, and should, be published

Mercy Otis Warren

1728–1814

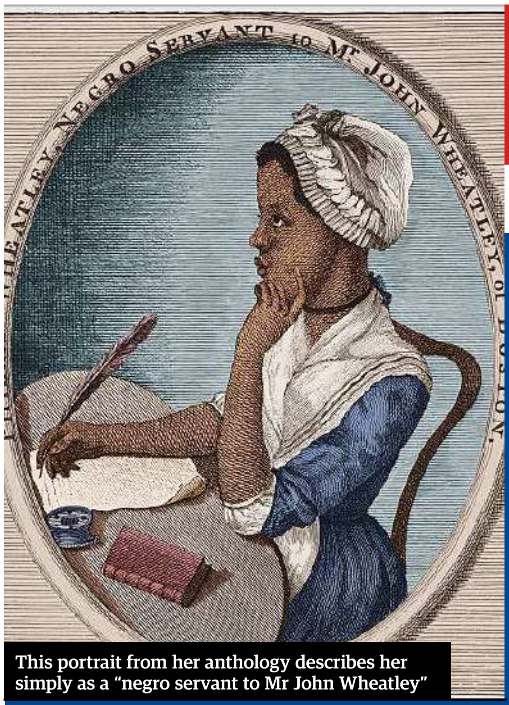
Warren's sharp wit and aptitude for politics made her a prominent chronicler of the era

Despite growing up in a well-to-do Massachusetts family, the young Mercy Otis Warren was denied the formal education given to her brothers. So, she convinced her uncle to let her sit in on their lessons. Her fascination with history and politics would soon serve her well.

After her brother was brutally beaten by British soldiers, Warren threw herself into the political sphere. Using an extensive network of contacts in the political elite, she organised protests at her home, and bore witness to some of the greatest events in American history - like the Stamp Act crisis and the Boston Tea Party.

To attract support, Warren used her keen political knowledge and skill for writing to publish satirical, pro-revolutionary columns and plays in prominent American newspapers. For instance, in 1772, her play The Adulator showcased grievances with the British government. Her witty style won her great popularity, and she counted Abigail Adams among her friends. They even exchanged letters on the nature of women's oppression, though Warren's opposition to John Adams' politics led to a fracture in their friendship.

After the revolution, Warren turned her hand to history writing, and her works have been of invaluable use ever since. Ever the firebrand, she continued her political correspondence until she died aged 86.


HEATLEY, NEGRO SERVANT to Mr. JOHN WHEATLEY, of BOSTON.

This portrait from her anthology describes her simply as a “negro servant to Mr John Wheatley”

Phillis Wheatley

c.1753–1784

The African woman whose poetry inspired Washington

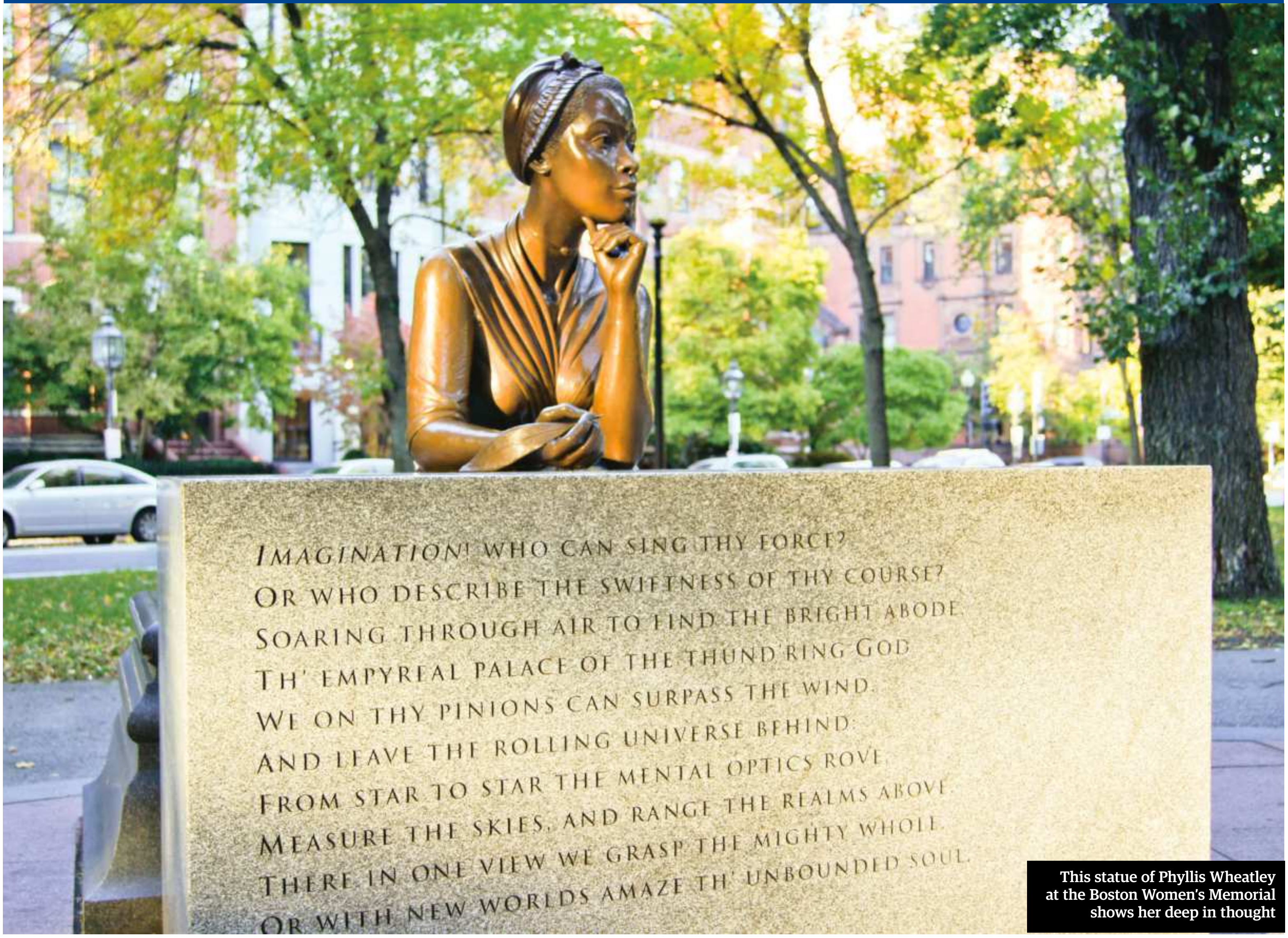
To free oneself from slavery was an incredible act of bravery by itself, but to become the US’s first African American poet puts Phillis Wheatley in a league of her own.

Born in West Africa, she was kidnapped and enslaved. Bought by the tailor John Wheatley in Boston in 1761, Phillis was treated kindly by her master’s family. They taught her how to read and write in English, and before long, she had mastered Greek and Latin, too.

As a young woman, Wheatley was known for her translations of classic texts, and her poems about morality and liberty. In On Being Brought from Africa to America (1768), she told the story of her journey in beautiful rhyme. Wheatley was even sent to London to publish an anthology.

Her English friends implored the Wheatley family to free their brilliant slave, so as soon as Wheatley returned, she was emancipated. In 1775, she wrote To His Excellency General Washington, wishing the future President great military success. He was so pleased, he replied, inviting her to come and visit his headquarters.

Wheatley married a free black man in 1778, but he abandoned her. By the time of her death, she was once again reduced to servitude, and died a poor - but free - woman.


IMAGINATION! WHO CAN SING THY FORCE?
OR WHO DESCRIBE THE SWIFTNESS OF THY COURSE?
SOARING THROUGH AIR TO FIND THE BRIGHT ABODE,
TH' EMPYREAL PALACE OF THE THUND'RING GOD,
WE ON THY PINIONS CAN SURPASS THE WIND,
AND LEAVE THE ROLLING UNIVERSE BEHIND:
FROM STAR TO STAR THE MENTAL OPTICS ROVE,
MEASURE THE SKIES, AND RANGE THE REALMS ABOVE.
THERE IN ONE VIEW WE GRASP THE MIGHTY WHOLE,
OR WITH NEW WORLDS AMAZE TH' UNBOUNDED SOUL.

This statue of Phyllis Wheatley at the Boston Women’s Memorial shows her deep in thought

Nancy Hart

c.1735–1830

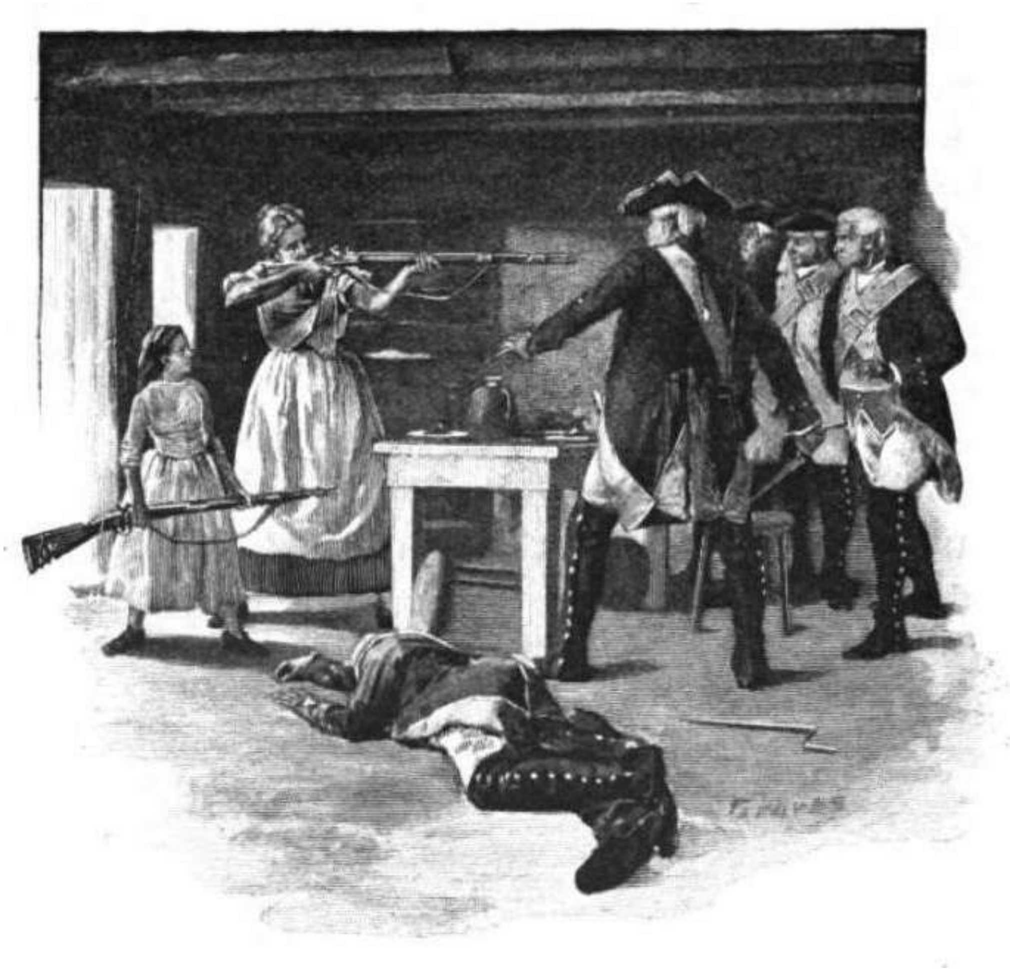
How this cunning 'war woman' made a fool out of British soldiers

A fanatical Whig from North Carolina, Nancy Hart would stop at nothing to rid her homeland of the rapacious British. Allegedly, she was a fiery redhead who towered over everyone at around six feet, and could handle a gun like a pro. Even the local Cherokee tribe were afraid of her, and nicknamed her 'War Woman'.

One story goes that some Tory soldiers came into Hart's home one day, and demanded this woman cook them a meal. They evidently didn't know whose threshold they had crossed, so Hart took advantage of their stupidity. She cooked them a meal and plied them with alcohol, while her daughter went out to alert the local Whigs.

Hart, meanwhile, stole some of their rifles. When they found out, they tried to attack her, but she killed one of their number and wounded another. The rest were lynched by the Whigs.

Many other legends tell of Hart's belligerency, and she remained a thorn in the side of the British until they were eventually ousted.



Having shot one of them, Nancy Hart threatens the British home invaders with one of their own rifles

Margaret Corbin

1751–1800

After watching her husband be killed, this pioneer kept calm and carried on

Frontierswoman Margaret Corbin wasn't your average country housewife. Life for pioneers was tough away from the major towns and cities, but women were still largely kept away from the action. Some women like Corbin, however, were not afraid to get their hands a little dirty.

Orphaned at the age of five by a Native American raid, Corbin learned to be steady in the face of danger. So, when her husband went to join the revolutionary cause, Corbin insisted on following him.

But in 1776, the new recruit was killed during a Hessian advance. Margaret Corbin, having observed how soldiers used heavy artillery, took her dead husband's place on the cannons and fired away at the enemy. Unfortunately, she was wounded and taken as a prisoner of war.

After her release, the now disabled Corbin struggled all the way from New York to Philadelphia. She continued to assist wounded troops until the war was over. Grateful for her brave service, the Continental Congress granted her a military pension - although it amounted to only half what male combatants received.

> "Corbin wasn't afraid to get her hands dirty"

Margaret Corbin's grave at the West Point military cemetery highlights her heroism and commitment to liberty

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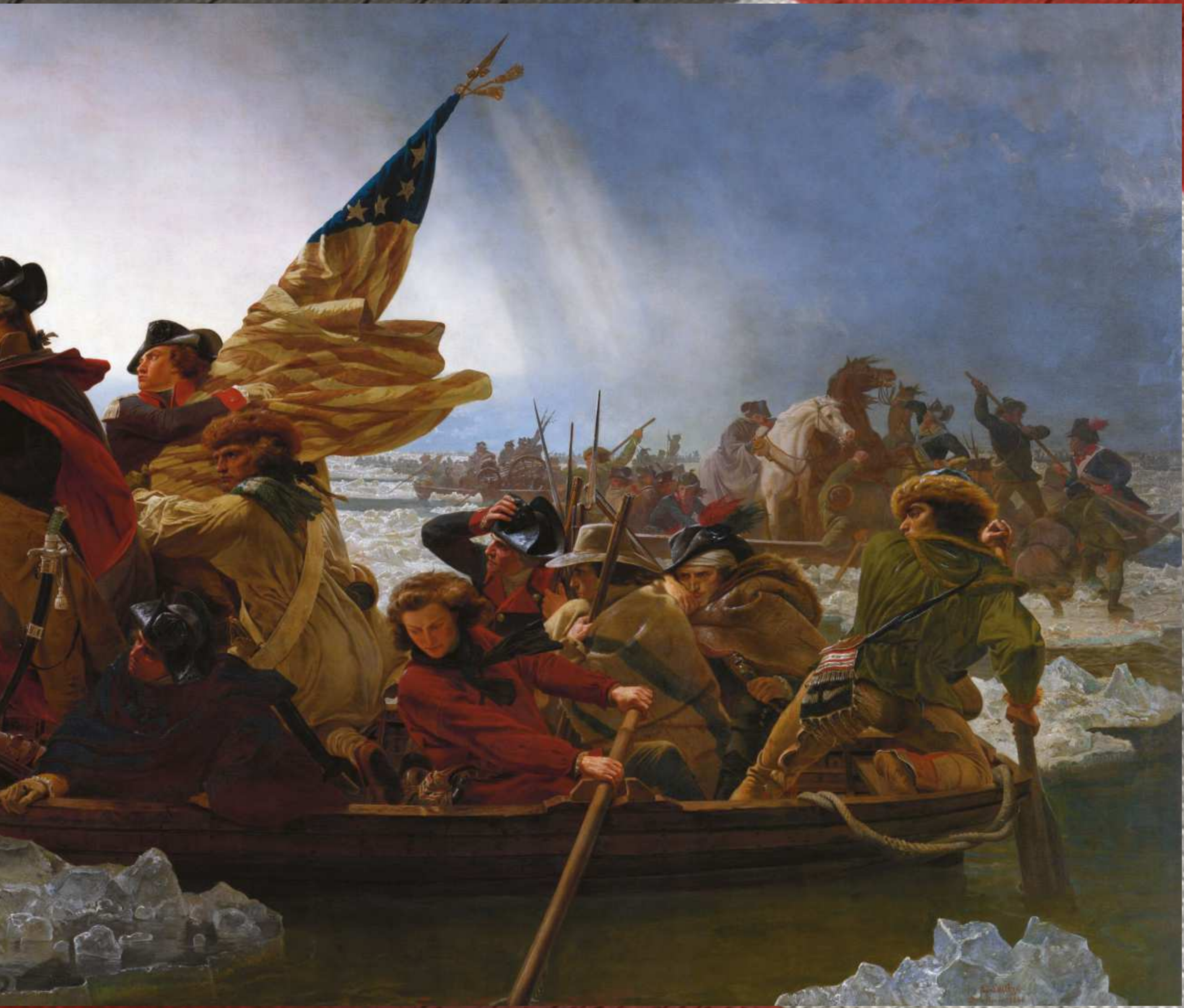

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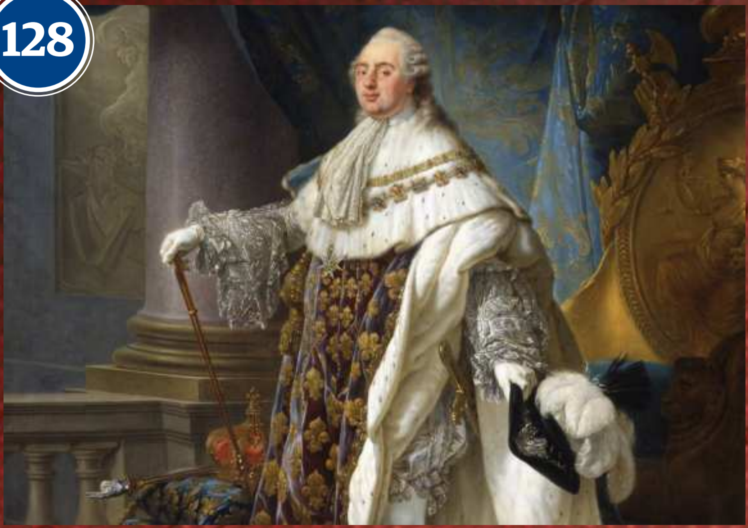

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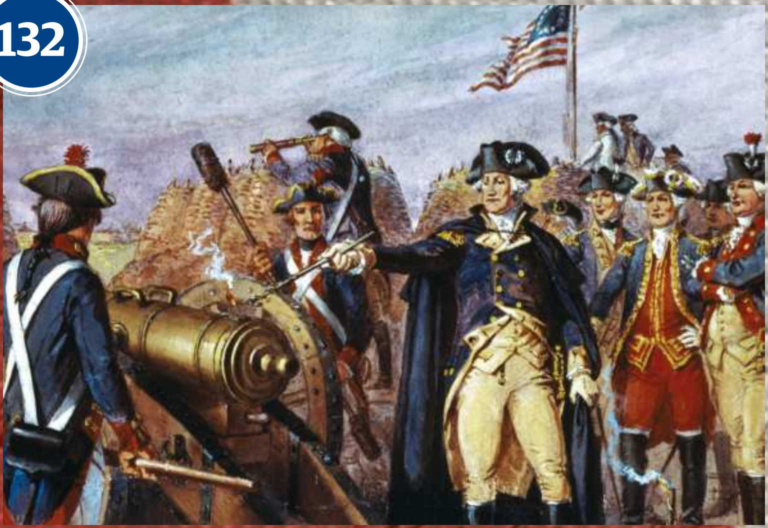
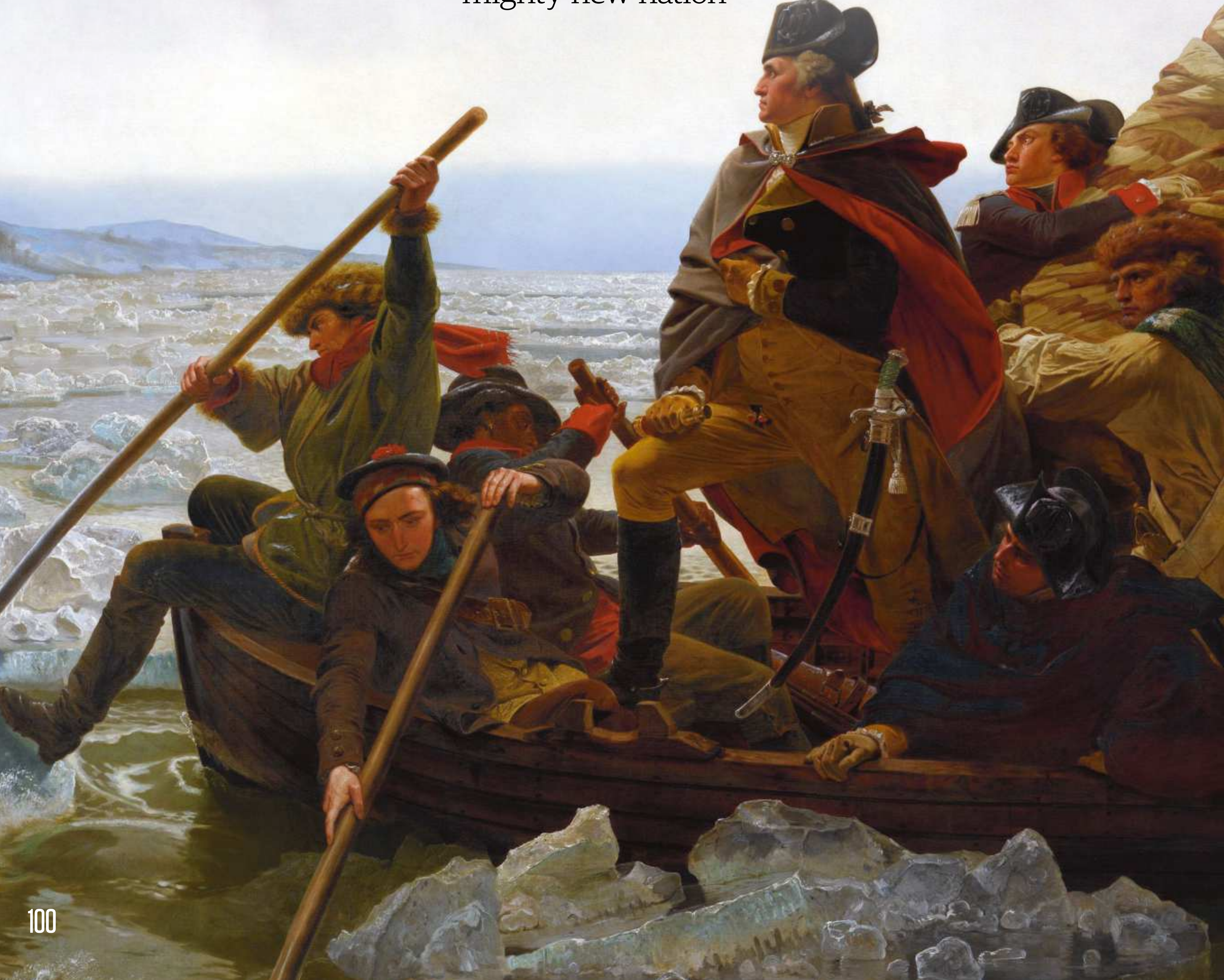


Revolutionary War

When the dominance of the crown became too much to bear, the flames of revolution sparked a struggle that would birth a mighty new nation

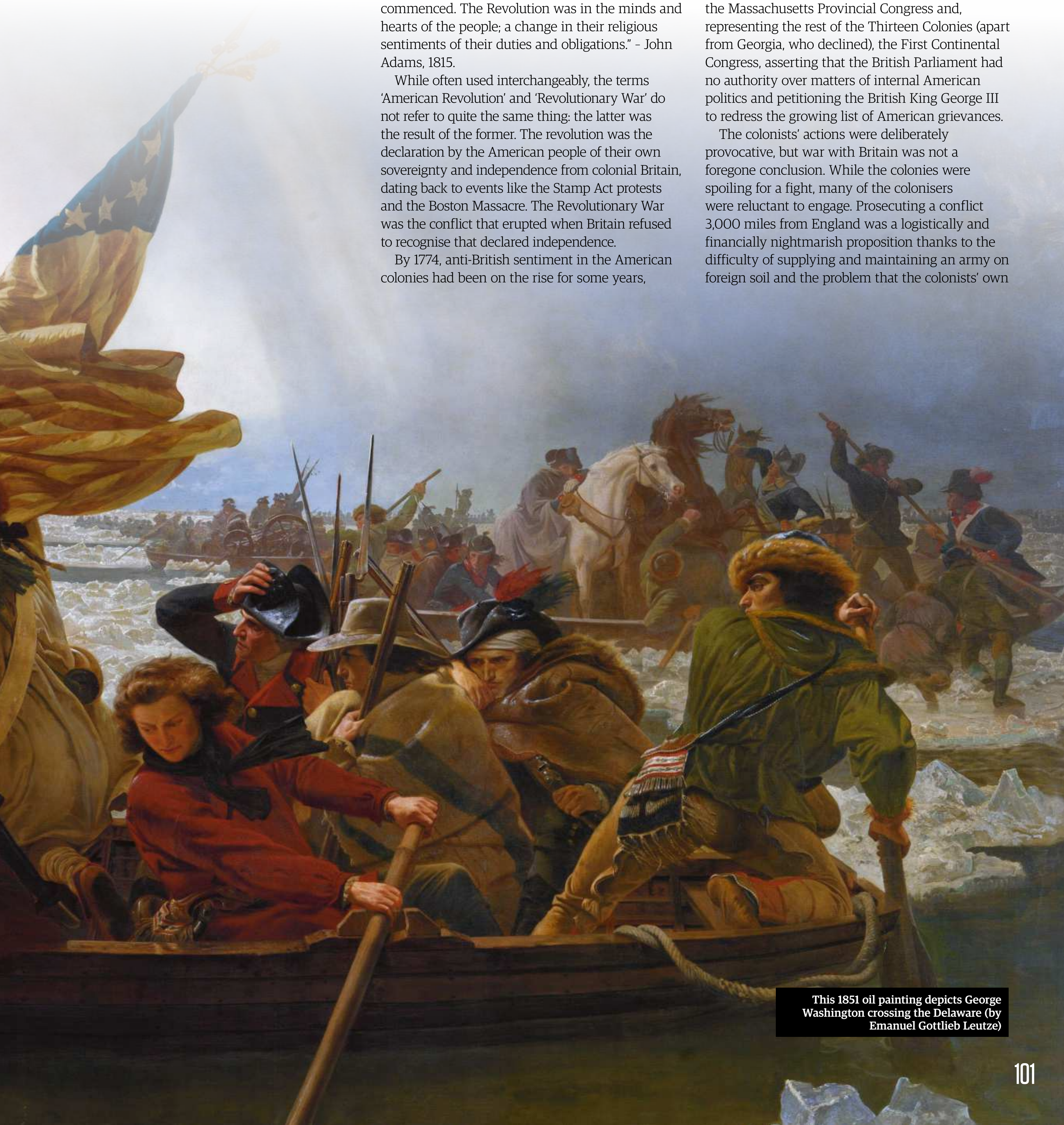


"What do we mean by the American Revolution? Do we mean the American war? That was no part of the Revolution; it was only an effect and consequence of it. The Revolution was effected before the war commenced. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people; a change in their religious sentiments of their duties and obligations." – John Adams, 1815.

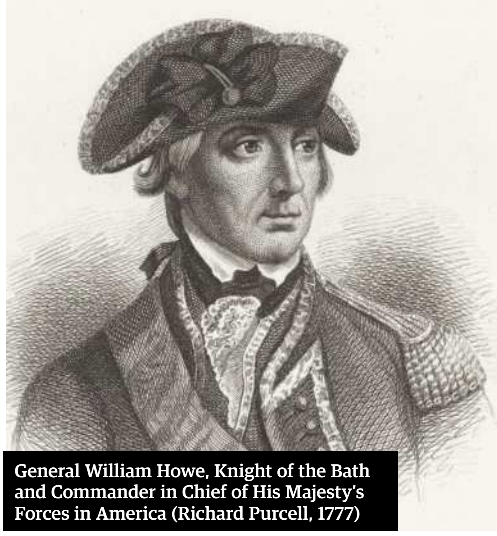
While often used interchangeably, the terms 'American Revolution' and 'Revolutionary War' do not refer to quite the same thing: the latter was the result of the former. The revolution was the declaration by the American people of their own sovereignty and independence from colonial Britain, dating back to events like the Stamp Act protests and the Boston Massacre. The Revolutionary War was the conflict that erupted when Britain refused to recognise that declared independence.

By 1774, anti-British sentiment in the American colonies had been on the rise for some years, culminating in the events of the Boston Tea Party. As a direct punishment for that disobedience, the British Parliament passed the Coercive (or 'Intolerable') Acts in 1775, designed to remodel the government of Massachusetts. The response of the colonists was the establishment of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress and, representing the rest of the Thirteen Colonies (apart from Georgia, who declined), the First Continental Congress, asserting that the British Parliament had no authority over matters of internal American politics and petitioning the British King George III to redress the growing list of American grievances.

The colonists' actions were deliberately provocative, but war with Britain was not a foregone conclusion. While the colonies were spoiling for a fight, many of the colonisers were reluctant to engage. Prosecuting a conflict 3,000 miles from England was a logistically and financially nightmarish proposition thanks to the difficulty of supplying and maintaining an army on foreign soil and the problem that the colonists' own

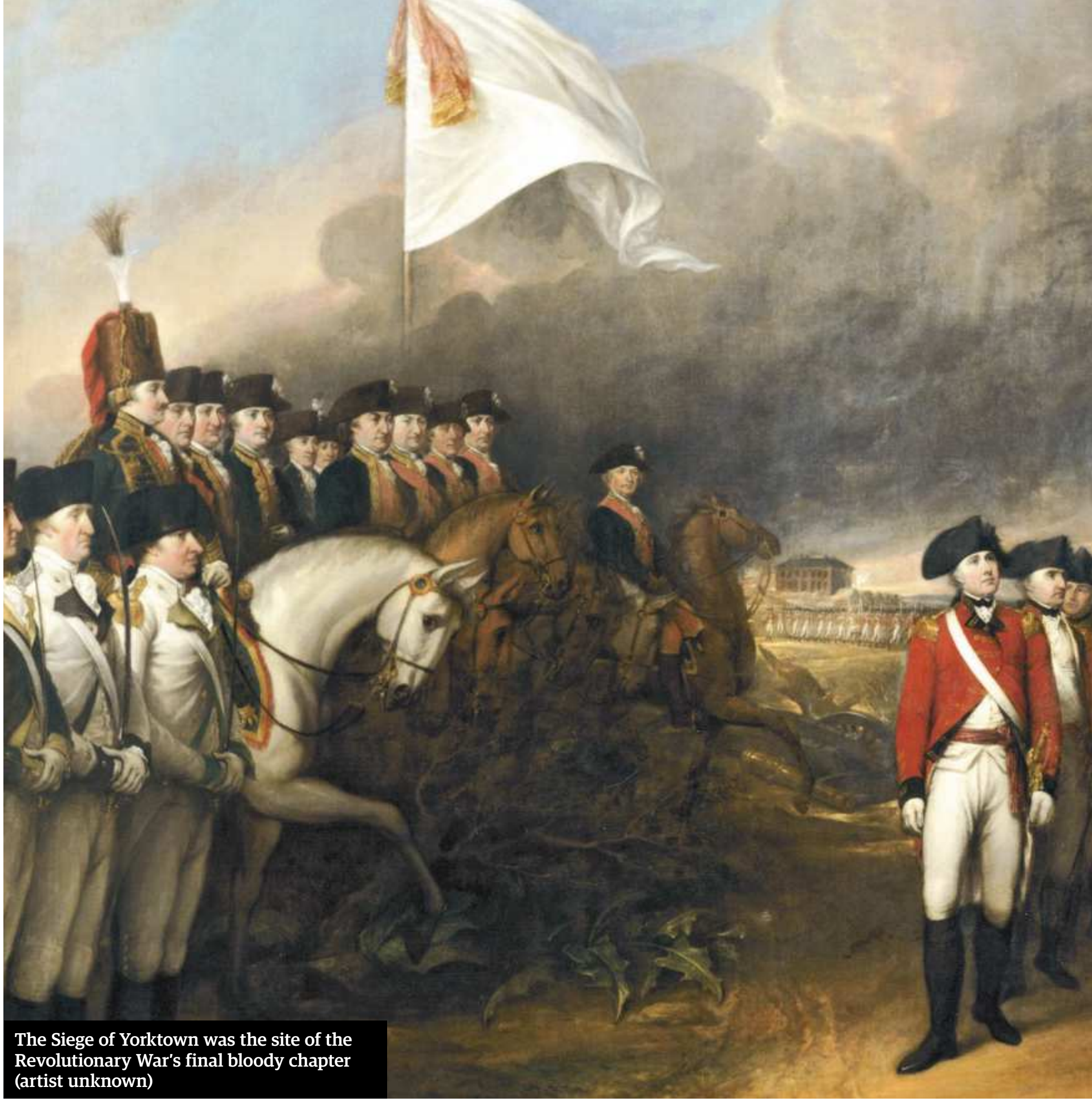


This 1851 oil painting depicts George Washington crossing the Delaware (by Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze)



General William Howe, Knight of the Bath and Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Forces in America (Richard Purcell, 1777)

"George III was unmoved and determined to put the colonies in their place by whatever force was required"



The Siege of Yorktown was the site of the Revolutionary War's final bloody chapter (artist unknown)

troops would know the territory far better than their enemies would. Sir William Howe, at the time in charge of British forces in America, was of the opinion that Britain should "withdraw entirely from the delinquent provinces and leave the colonists to war with each other for sovereignty".

"We [would be] fighting for the subjection, the unconditional submission of a country infinitely more extended than our own," warned Lord Mayor of London Sir Thomas Halifax. "Should we not succeed... the grandeur of the British Empire [will] pass away."

George III, however, was unmoved by these arguments and determined to put the colonies in their place by whatever force was required. The Continental Congress had agreed to reconvene in May 1775 should their appeal be unsuccessful, but events overtook them. By April violence had already erupted.

With Massachusetts already considered by the British as being in a state of rebellion, 700 British Army regulars under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith left Boston on 19 April on a mission to destroy colonial militia supplies stored at the town of Concord. Warned in advance, militiamen intercepted the British en route at Lexington, resulting in shots being fired and the deaths of eight of the American men. Proceeding on to Concord, the British regulars suffered their first casualties when they were met with resistance at the North Bridge. Smith's troops were eventually able to complete their search for militia supplies, but their return journey to Boston was so besieged by militia from Concord and its neighbouring towns that Smith and his men had to be rescued by reinforcements under Brigadier General Hugh Percy. Even then, the combined force of 1,700 British soldiers was backed into a tactical withdrawal while under heavy fire. The accumulated militias then blockaded access to Boston in a siege lasting almost a year. It was the opening phase of the Revolutionary War.

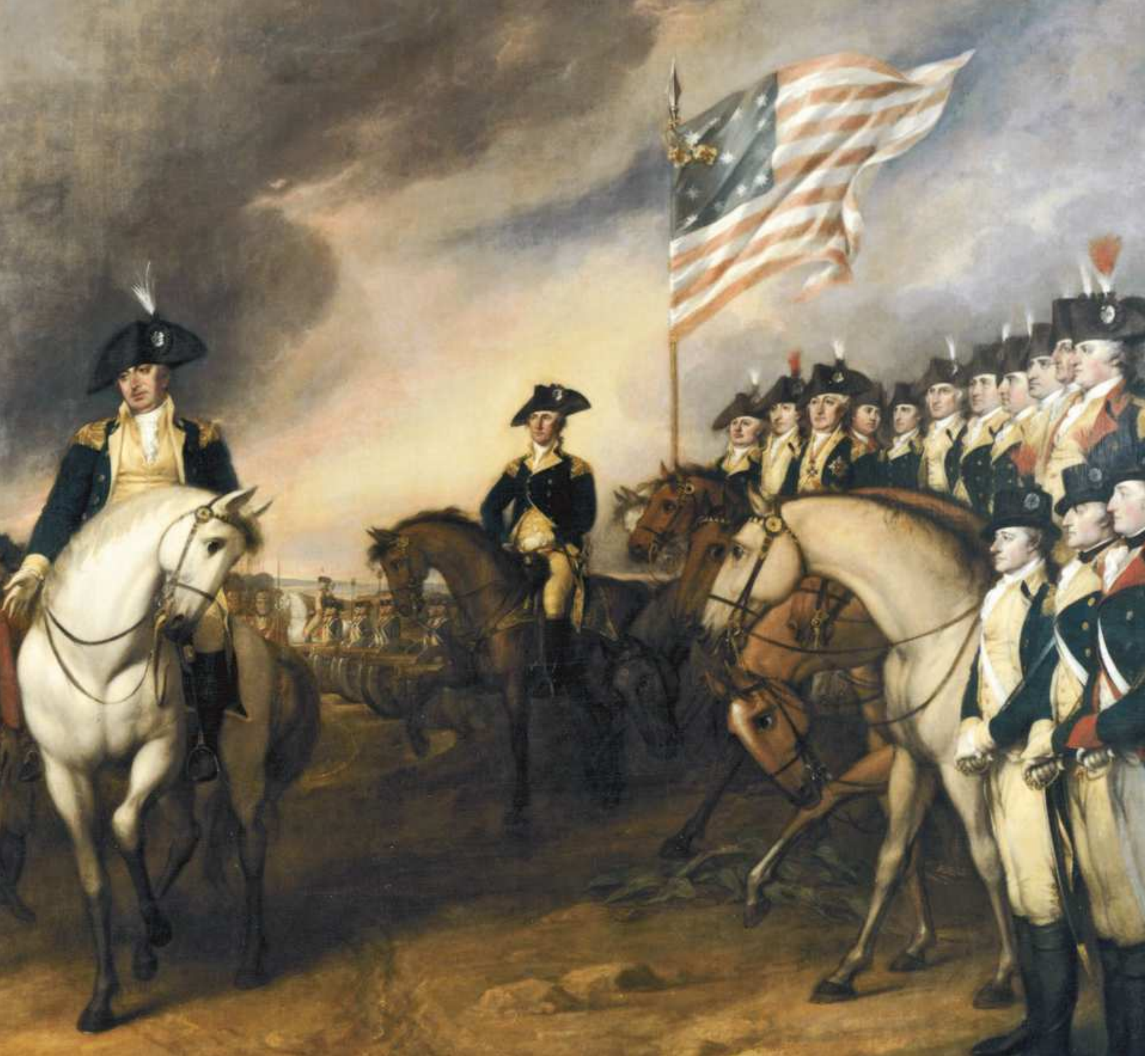
In July 1775, the Second Continental Congress – including John and Samuel Adams of Massachusetts, Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, John Jay of New York and Benjamin Franklin of Philadelphia – convened in Philadelphia and voted to form a Continental Army. George Washington would be its commander-in-chief. On 17 June that Colonial force inflicted significant casualties on the British troops under Howe's command at the Battle of Bunker Hill. Although the British managed to claw a victory from that occasion, the Revolutionaries' cause gained strength from it, and Washington's forces were eventually able to secure a British evacuation of Boston in March the following year. Howe and his troops retreated to Canada to thrash out strategies for a British invasion of New York.

On 4 July, 1776, the Continental Congress voted to adopt the Declaration of Independence. While it was music to the ears of the Revolutionaries, it was less well received by Native Americans, who saw the union of the colonies as a threat to their own precarious position in the country. Around 13,000 Native Americans opted to fight against the colonists on the British side, including members of the Iroquois, Seneca, Onondaga, Cherokee, Creek, Seminole and Cayuga nations. The Mohawk nation was split between both sides, while the Tuscarora and Oneida largely sided with the colonists. Those that fought with the British faced disastrous consequences in the eventual independent United States – although the tribes who sided with the colonists were hardly spectacularly rewarded either.

Washington read the Declaration to his men and a large crowd of citizens in New York on 9 July, resulting in the crowd tearing down a lead statue of George III and melting it down for bullets. Shortly afterwards, Howe's 34,000-strong British force crushed the Continental Army at New York's Long Island. Washington was forced out of the city but famously crossed the Delaware River and launched successful surprise attacks in New Jersey and Princeton. Great propaganda as well as military victories, they were instrumental in bringing France into the conflict as American allies.

This was now a world war. Spain joined next, in support of the French (but, peculiarly, not as a direct ally of the Americans). Colonial subjects in India rose up against the British there, while the British East India Company strove to seize French assets in Pondicherry and Mahé, and Britain also found tensions with the Netherlands escalating.

Nevertheless, the following year was almost disastrous for the Revolutionaries. British strategy



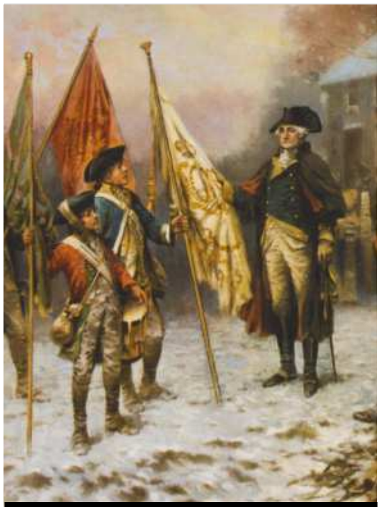
in North America in 1777 was a two-pronged attack aimed at separating New England from the rest of the colonies. Howe's troops engaged Washington's at the Battle of Brandywine Creek in Pennsylvania on 11 September, an 11-hour confrontation that was the longest of any fought on a single day during the entire war and the one that involved the most combatants. Washington was forced into another retreat, with Howe capturing and occupying Philadelphia until the following year. A philosophical Washington, however, was coming to realise that the traditional strategy of capturing cities would not actually much avail the British in this war. "It is our arms, not defenceless towns, they have to subdue," he wrote.

General John Burgoyne's contingent, meanwhile, marched south from Canada to retake Fort Ticonderoga in northern New York. But the Revolutionaries pushed back again, with an American force led by General Horatio Gates forcing Burgoyne's surrender following two resounding defeats at Saratoga in September. It was a crucial turning point in the war. Howe resigned his commission in October 1777, complaining that he'd had inadequate support for his campaigns.

A hard winter at Valley Forge saw the American troops taking training from their new French allies – France officially declared war against Britain in support of the American colonists in June 1778. Washington's forces fought those of the new British Supreme Commander Sir Henry Clinton, Howe's replacement, at New Jersey the same month, ending in stalemate. British forces fared better in the southern states over the subsequent months, occupying Georgia and capturing Charleston, South Carolina by May 1780. The British Lord Charles Cornwallis led a victory against General Horatio Gates' American forces at Camden, South Carolina in August.

By December, however, Gates had been replaced as American Commander in the south by Nathanael Green, who, by the autumn of 1781, had succeeded in forcing Cornwallis into a retreat to Yorktown in Virginia. The Yorktown Peninsula would prove to be the site of the war's endgame. A confident Washington led 14,000 American troops against Cornwallis, supported by a fleet of 36 French warships, preventing reinforcement or evacuation and eventually forcing Cornwallis' humiliating surrender on 19 October. Almost 8,000 British soldiers instantly became prisoners of war.

When news of the surrender reached the other side of the Atlantic and the ears of the British Government the following month, Parliament voted overwhelmingly to end the conflict. Britain finally removed the large part of its forces from America in the winter of 1782 and negotiated and signed the peace treaty formally recognising the independence of the United States in Paris in November (terms with its other European antagonists were agreed at the same time). The Treaty of Paris officially marked the end of an eight-year war that had claimed thousands of lives on both sides, but more importantly it marked the birth of a new nation.



Washington inspects the captured colours after the Battle of Trenton (Edward Percy Moran, 1914)

Washtington crossing the Delaware

The future president of the United States' fording of a river provided a much-needed lift for the rebels

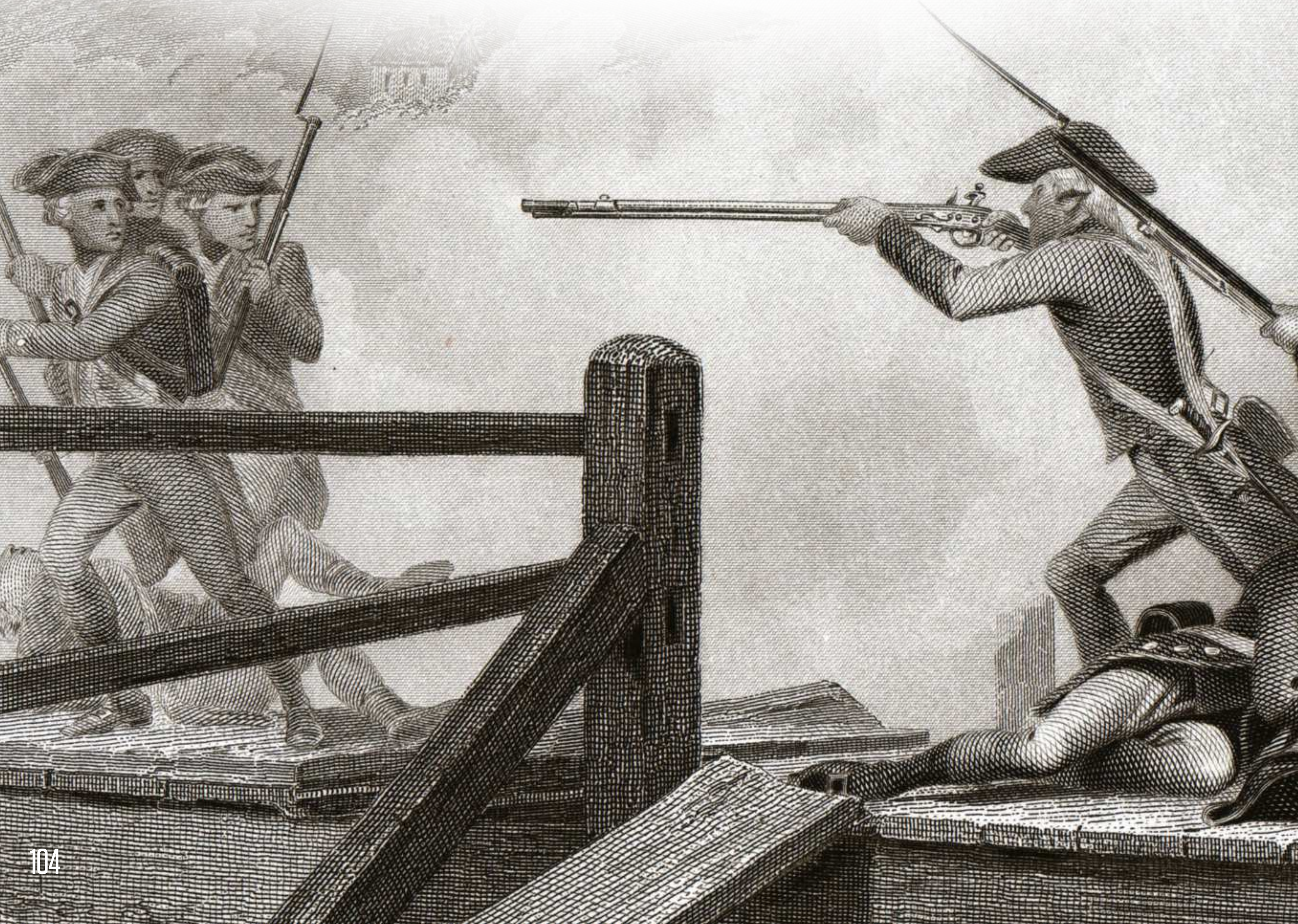
In the famous Groucho Marx song, George Washington's crossing of the Delaware River is one of the most prominent artworks on Lydia the Tattooed Lady. It's a good example of the event's indelible place in the American memory – even though it wasn't actually a particularly great or strategically important victory.

The point of crossing the Delaware was a surprise attack by Washington and his troops on the German mercenary forces fighting for the British and camped in Trenton, New Jersey, at Christmas, 1776. Washington outlined his plans for the operation on Christmas Day itself, which would see his forces cross the water from Pennsylvania to New Jersey as soon as darkness fell. Boats and ferries were sourced from surrounding counties, not just for Washington's 2,400 soldiers, but also for the necessary horses and the sizeable artillery train comprising 18 cannons weighing up to 1,750 pounds each. As if that wasn't enough of a challenge, the crossing was also achieved in freezing blizzard conditions. The crossing point itself was only 300 yards, but there was a ten-mile march waiting for Washington's troops on the other side.

The effort paid off, however, with Washington's force claiming a decisive victory over the 1,400 Germans on the morning of 26 December while suffering only nine casualties. The Americans took 1,000 prisoners and seized vital supplies, but after a series of defeats, the boost to morale was the greatest prize of all.

Revolution at Lexington and Concord

After years of political posturing and civil unrest, the first shots of the American Revolution were fired in Massachusetts



By the spring of 1775, the winding road to revolution stretched into the Massachusetts countryside a few miles northwest of Boston, an occupied city seething with rage against the 3,000-man British garrison under General Thomas Gage.

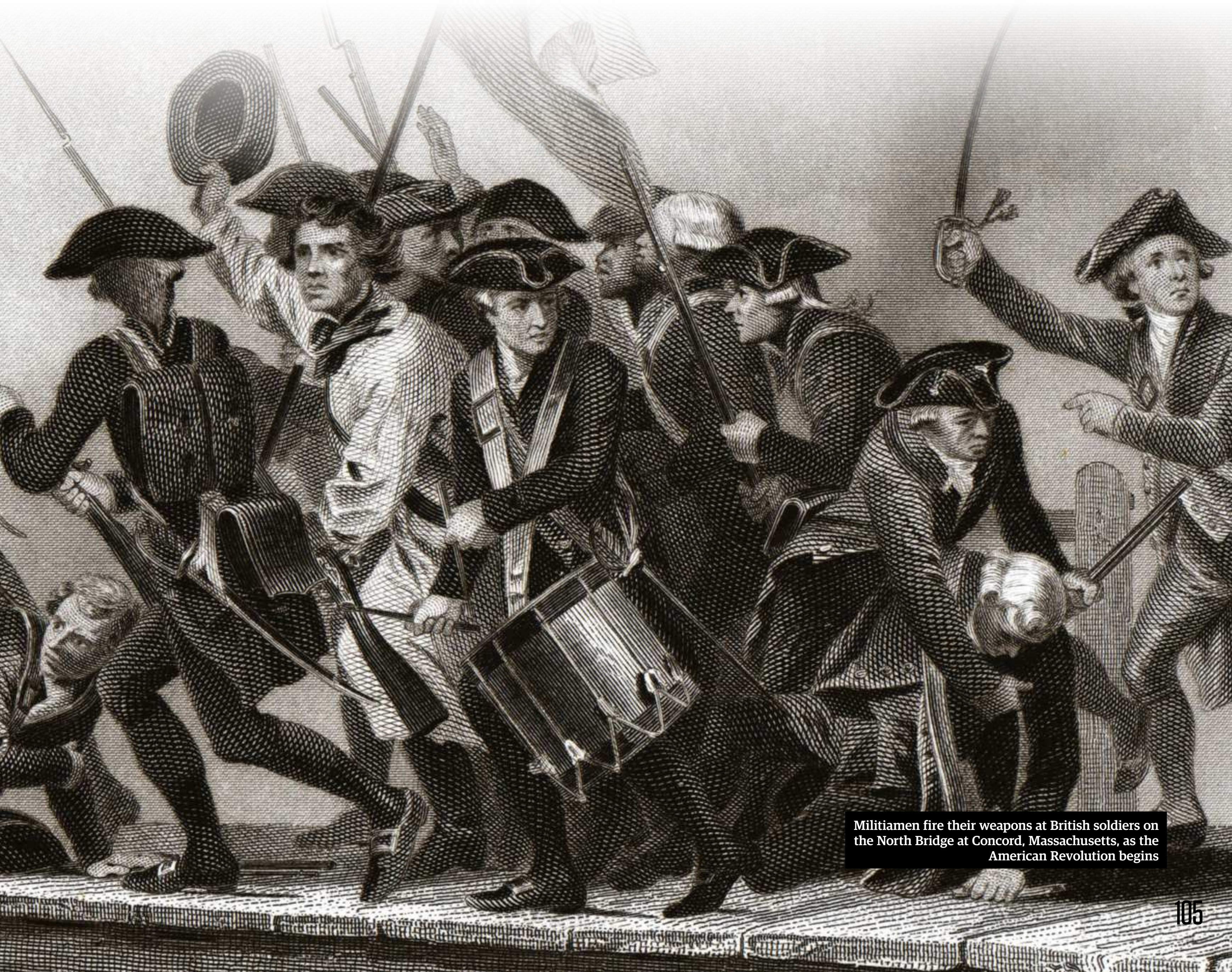
Since the imposition of the Coercive Acts in 1774 the Port of Boston had been closed to trade, and Parliament had declared that the entire colony was in rebellion. Gage was aware that the Massachusetts Assembly, meeting in seclusion, had called for the organisation of a militia and sought support from other colonial governments in raising an army of up to 18,000 men in the event of war. The rebels had stockpiled arms and ammunition at various locations, and the prudent course of action was to seize these caches in order to diminish the obvious threat.

Gage planned a swift expedition to secure the stores at Concord about 16 miles outside Boston. Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith of the 10th Regiment of Foot was detailed with leading about 700 elite light infantrymen, grenadiers and marines of several regiments to accomplish the task. Although he hoped for secrecy, Gage realised there were in fact spies everywhere. Indeed, soon enough the British plans were well known within Patriot circles.

Forward to Concord

On the night of 18 April, rebel riders, including Paul Revere, William Dawes, and Samuel Prescott, were raising the alarm. The British Army was out in force and headed toward Concord. Around 10 pm, the soldiers had been roused from fitful sleep and formed into ranks. Ferried across Back Bay to Lechmere Point, they began their fateful trek out of Boston. They undoubtedly heard the ringing of church bells and the boom of cannon, which signalled to the uneasy country farmers in their path that the raid was in motion. Smith's route took his column through the town of Lexington, about ten miles from Boston, and around 4:30 am, as the first streaks of daylight tinted the eastern sky, the British vanguard approached the village. Major John Pitcairn, a Royal Marine officer and second-in-command of the expedition, led from the front. On the edge of town, he heard a steady drumbeat calling militiamen to arms, prompting him to order his men to halt long enough to load their weapons and deploy in double ranks.

The local militia had responded rapidly to the British advance. The citizens took pride in their speed and preparedness, earning the nickname of 'minutemen'. A 45-year-old captain called John Parker, a veteran Indian fighter and former member of Rogers' Rangers who had fought with the British during the French and Indian War, assembled 140 citizen-soldiers in Lexington, the first arriving at 1 am. By the time the British had appeared about half had gone home, perhaps believing the situation was a hoax.



Militiamen fire their weapons at British soldiers on the North Bridge at Concord, Massachusetts, as the American Revolution begins

"As troops spilled onto the green a shot rang out"

Disperse, ye rebels!

The British approached Lexington from the south, and Pitcairn ordered his light infantry forward at the double quick, skirting the edges of the village green around both sides of the community church. Then they saw Parker's militia formed in two lines. Although the Patriots were not barring the road to Concord, they presented a challenge. Pitcairn rode forward and bellowed, "Disperse, ye rebels! I say disperse! Lay down your arms ye damned rebels!"

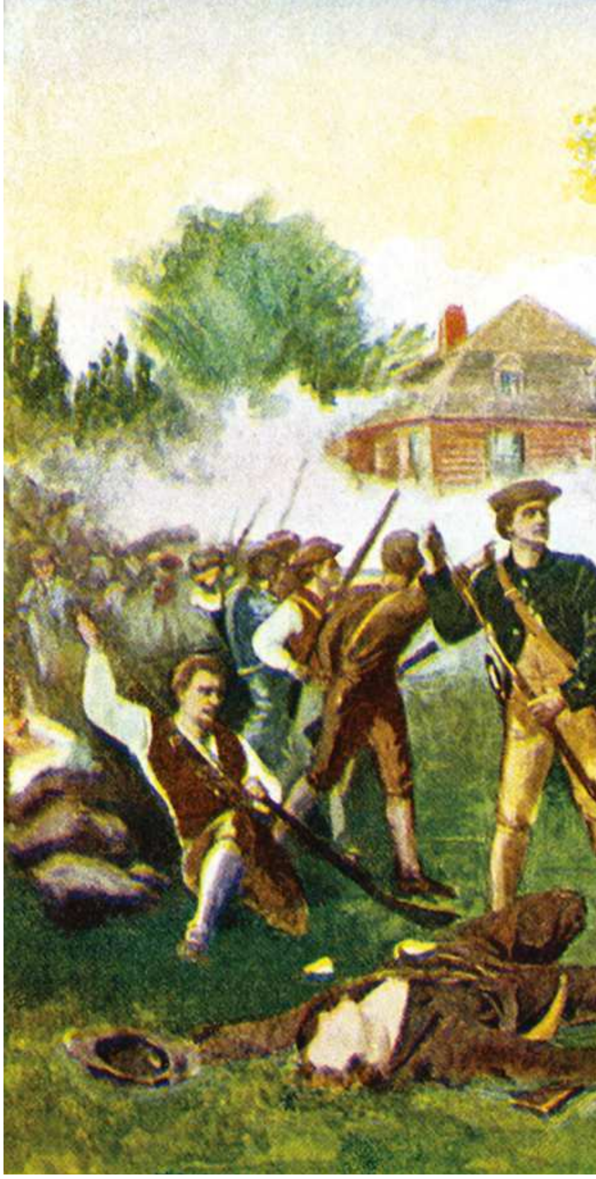
For a moment, it appeared a direct confrontation might be averted. Parker knew his handful of militia was outnumbered and might be slaughtered to a man if he did not allow them to scatter. He passed the word, and the rebels trickled toward the edges of the village green and into the shadows. The slow pace of compliance and the fact that the militiamen were holding onto their weapons rather than surrendering them evidently irked Pitcairn. As his troops spilled onto the green a single shot rang out, one of the most important shots in history.

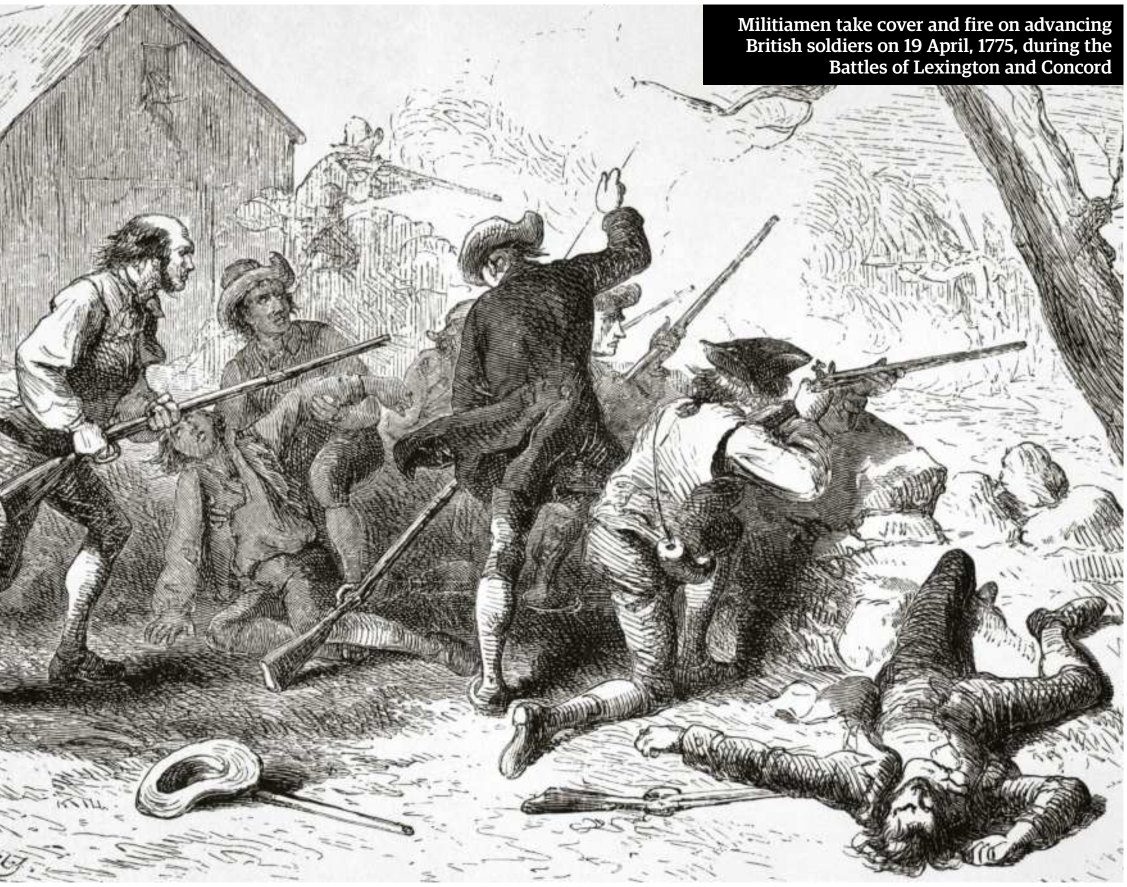
While there is no clear indication as to which side fired first, the well-trained British soldiers loosed several volleys in succession, despite Pitcairn's repeated calls for them to cease fire. Running for cover, the militiamen fired a few haphazard shots to no effect.

Lieutenant Colonel Smith heard the gunfire and hurried to the scene as Pitcairn attempted to regain control of his infantrymen, excited by the eruption of violence and straining to continue the fight that was by now well under way. Only one British soldier suffered a slight injury to his knee. However, eight militiamen lay dead and ten wounded on Lexington Green. The British formed up, raised a cheer and fired a victory volley before continuing on the road toward Concord.

While the British forged ahead, word of the bloodshed at Lexington preceded them. Militiamen rose from their beds across the countryside and gathered in the vicinity of Concord, 400 strong as the red-coated column approached the town. About one-third of these men, led by Captain William Smith, marched toward the expected British route about 7 am. When Smith spotted the British column along the road he quickly withdrew to the north and took possession of a low ridge that commanded the approaches. In turn, the British under Colonel Smith demonstrated toward the position. The militia abandoned the high ground, crossed the North Bridge that spanned the Concord River, and occupied Punktasset Hill.

As his soldiers entered Concord, Colonel Smith divided his force into three components to provide security and search for rebel weapons and ammunition stores. Captain Walter Laurie of the 43rd Regiment recalled, "During the time the Grenadiers were employed in destroying the magazine of flour, gun carriages & at Concord, six companies of Light Infantry under the command of Captain Parsons were detached to a Bridge about one mile from Town, in order, as I was informed, to destroy some guns and military stores, supposed to be collected thereabouts."



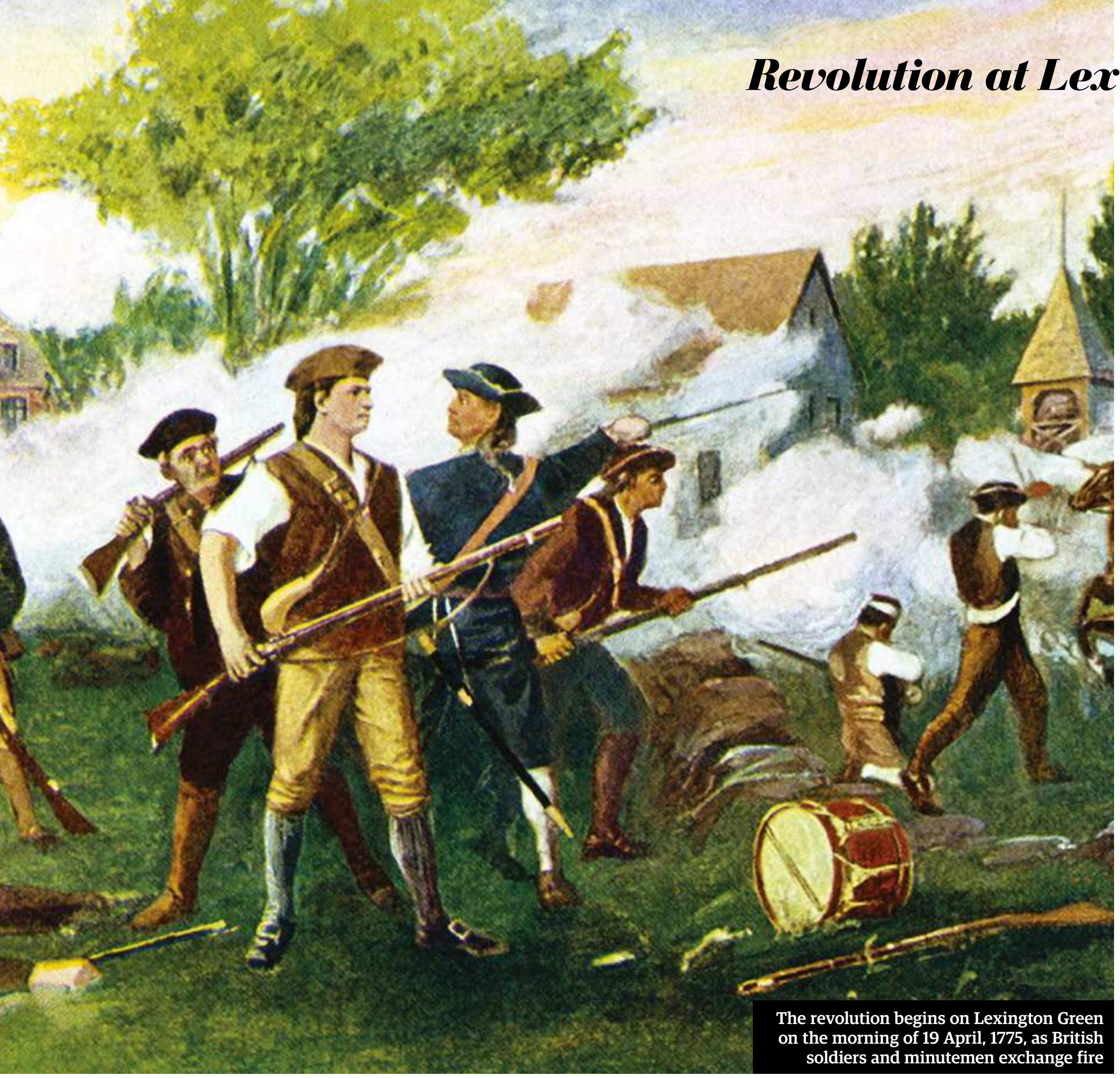


Militiamen take cover and fire on advancing British soldiers on 19 April, 1775, during the Battles of Lexington and Concord

The home of Colonel James Barrett, commander of the Concord militia, was nearby, and Colonel Smith sent three companies to find cannon and other weapons supposedly stored there. Other troops searched the buildings in the town and somehow set fire to the county courthouse and other structures. From Punktasset Hill, Barrett watched the streaks of smoke and flame, fearing the town would be burned to the ground. The unbridled anger of his men compelled him to respond, and soon he led about 400 militiamen down the slope and toward the British at the North Bridge, giving strict orders not to fire unless they were fired upon.

Roar of muskets

Captain Laurie's light infantry did open fire moments later, but their first shots were erratic. Initially, the militiamen thought the soldiers might only be firing powder charges meant to frighten the farmers. However, when a ball zipped by one man's head, he cried out. There was no doubt that the British were firing loaded guns.



The revolution begins on Lexington Green on the morning of 19 April, 1775, as British soldiers and minutemen exchange fire

The minutemen levelled their muskets and unleashed a volley that felled at least seven British soldiers, although some reports allude to as many as 12 casualties, four officers among them. Laurie pulled back from the bridge, and the three companies of light infantry at Barrett's farm were temporarily cut off. Apparently, the rebels did not realise they held a tactical advantage and split in half, some men tending to their two dead and two wounded friends while others retired temporarily to the ridge they had occupied early in the encounter.

Surveying the situation, Colonel Smith was keenly aware that the number of militia was growing steadily. Fortuitously, he had requested that reinforcements from Boston march to his aid in the event of hostilities. Expecting these additional troops to meet his command on the road back to Boston and believing he had accomplished his mission, Smith ordered a general retirement around noon. The retrograde movement soon became a harrowing experience.

Running battle and retreat

At Meriam's Corner, the farmstead of Josiah Meriam that had stood on the outskirts of Concord since 1663, a brief but sharp clash occurred. From there the pace of the British withdrawal quickened, the militiamen nipping at their heels on the road toward Lexington, firing at them from behind rocks, bushes and trees and taking shots from open windows of houses that lined the road. When the British halted to fan soldiers out into the brush to dragnet militiamen, their stationary main body was harassed with concentrated fire.

The British command was on the verge of becoming a disorganised rabble as the soldiers clawed their way into Lexington. To his great relief, Smith met a brigade of soldiers sent from Boston as he had requested. With 1,000 men and artillery, Brigadier General Hugh Percy stood firm while their beleaguered comrades caught their breath for an hour. One observer remembered "their tongues hanging out of their mouths, like those of dogs after a chase".

When the march resumed, militiamen harried the soldiers through the hamlets of Menotomy and Cambridge. By evening, the ragged British ranks reached Charlestown Neck and the shelter of big guns aboard Royal Navy warships. It had been a dark day for the British Army. Approximately 250 soldiers were killed or wounded, while the militiamen counted 90 casualties. War had come.

The news of the fighting at Lexington and Concord spread swiftly through the colonies, now more united than ever in a common cause. Virginia statesman Patrick Henry remarked, "The distinctions between Virginians, Pennsylvanians, New Yorkers, and New Englanders are no more. I am not a Virginian, but an American!"

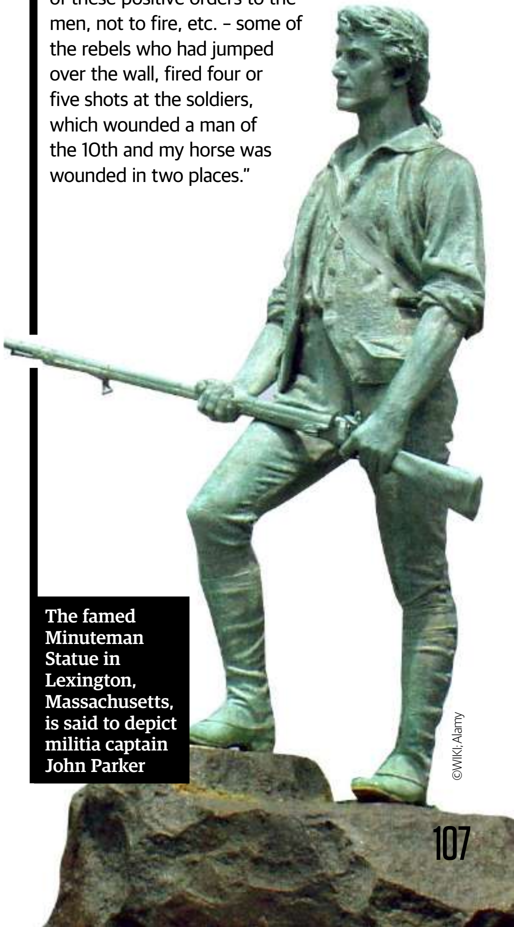
Who fired the first shot?

They pulled the trigger and changed global history forever, but who started the revolution?

While the identity of the individual who fired the first shot on Lexington Green on 19 April, 1775, will probably never be known, it is readily apparent that both sides stood firm in their conviction that it was the other.

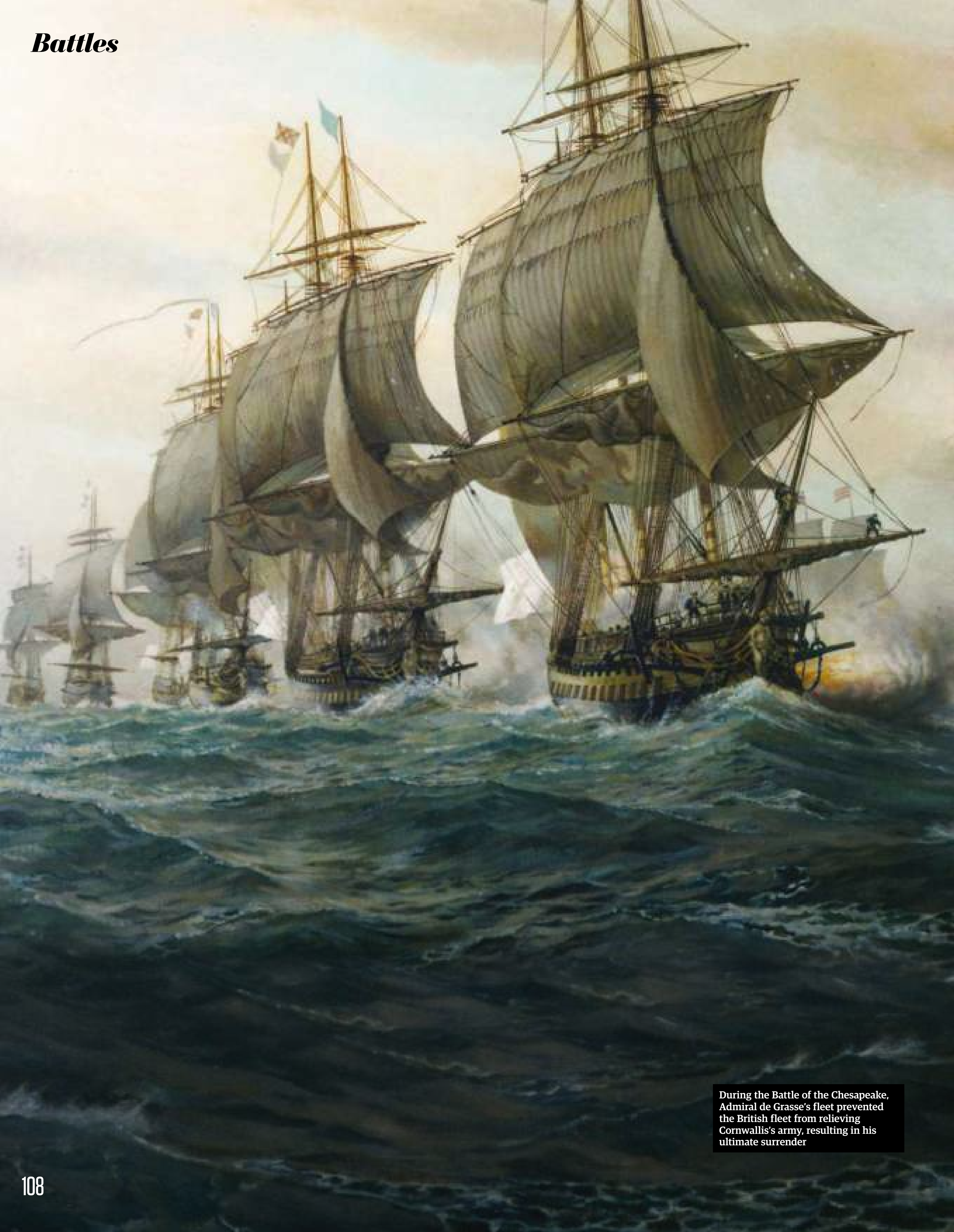
Three days after the battle, the Massachusetts assembly formed a committee to investigate the circumstances surrounding the fighting. Statesman Elbridge Gerry served as chairman, and several militiamen gave accounts. On 25 April, Captain John Parker testified that he had gathered the militia at Lexington and consulted with them "on what to do". He commented that they "concluded not to be discovered, not to meddle or make with said Regular Troops unless they should insult us, and upon their sudden approach, I immediately ordered our Militia to disperse and not to fire. Immediately Said Troops made their appearance and rushed furiously, fired upon and killed eight of our party without receiving any provocation therefore from us."

Major John Pitcairn, the ranking British officer on the scene, reported from camp on 26 April that his light infantry had begun to chase some militiamen as they ran toward a stone wall. "I instantly called to the soldiers not to fire, but surround and disarm them and after several repetitions of these positive orders to the men, not to fire, etc. – some of the rebels who had jumped over the wall, fired four or five shots at the soldiers, which wounded a man of the 10th and my horse was wounded in two places."



The famed Minuteman Statue in Lexington, Massachusetts, is said to depict militia captain John Parker

©WIKI; Alamy



During the Battle of the Chesapeake, Admiral de Grasse's fleet prevented the British fleet from relieving Cornwallis's army, resulting in his ultimate surrender

Bourbon vengeance

The Seven Years' War left the monarchs of France and Spain thirsting for revenge – their new battlefield was North America

Words Marc DeSantis

With the outbreak of fighting at Lexington and Concord in 1775, which heralded the start of the American War of Independence, Britain's European rivals saw the chance to gain economically if the 13 rebellious American colonies could be removed from Britain's commercial stranglehold. Many of Europe's key powers hoped to increase their own sales in North America if the colonies became independent and free to trade internationally. For some, more than money was at stake.

Both France and Spain had been big losers in the Seven Years' War (1756-63). Spain had given up both East and West Florida, and while these losses weren't disastrous, Spain's surviving holdings in North America were now under threat. Britain had been the undisputed victor of that conflict, gaining huge territories, and Florida's Pensacola was an excellent port out of which it could conduct smuggling or mount attacks on Spanish Louisiana. It might have even be used to interdict shipping from Cuba. To compensate Spain for its wartime losses, France had, in 1763, given up Louisiana, including the port of New Orleans. France's loss of its Canadian territories took with it its rich fur trade and also jeopardised its share of the Newfoundland fisheries. All this meant the American colonists, when they revolted against Britain, would find many sympathetic ears among the French and Spanish.

Vengeance was on French minds after 1763, and foremost was the foreign minister, the Comte de Vergennes. He sought to humble and injure the British in any way he could. "England is the natural enemy of France," he declared, and "is a greedy enemy, ambitious, unjust and treacherous: the unalterable and cherished object of her policy is, if not the destruction of France, at least her degradation and ruin."

In the post-war period, Britain had made serious political missteps of its own. It was ill served by statesmen who disregarded the need to maintain good relations with the rest of Europe. Their haughty attitude did nothing to endear Britain to the other courts of Europe, and the American War of Independence would be fought by Britain on its own, without the benefit of an ally on the continent.

1 million livres had been given to the company by King Louis to buy military supplies for the Americans

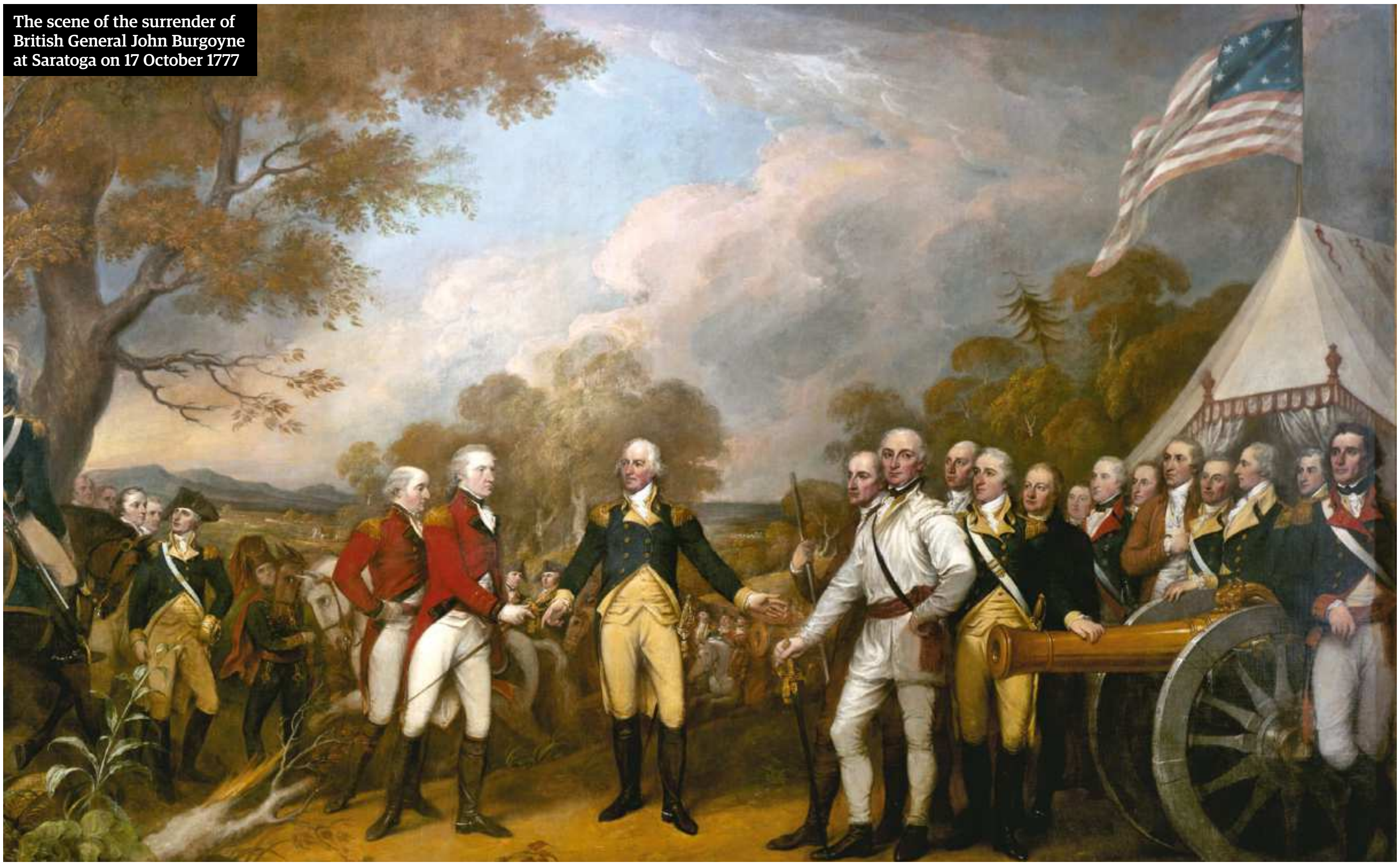
Gunpowder for the rebellion

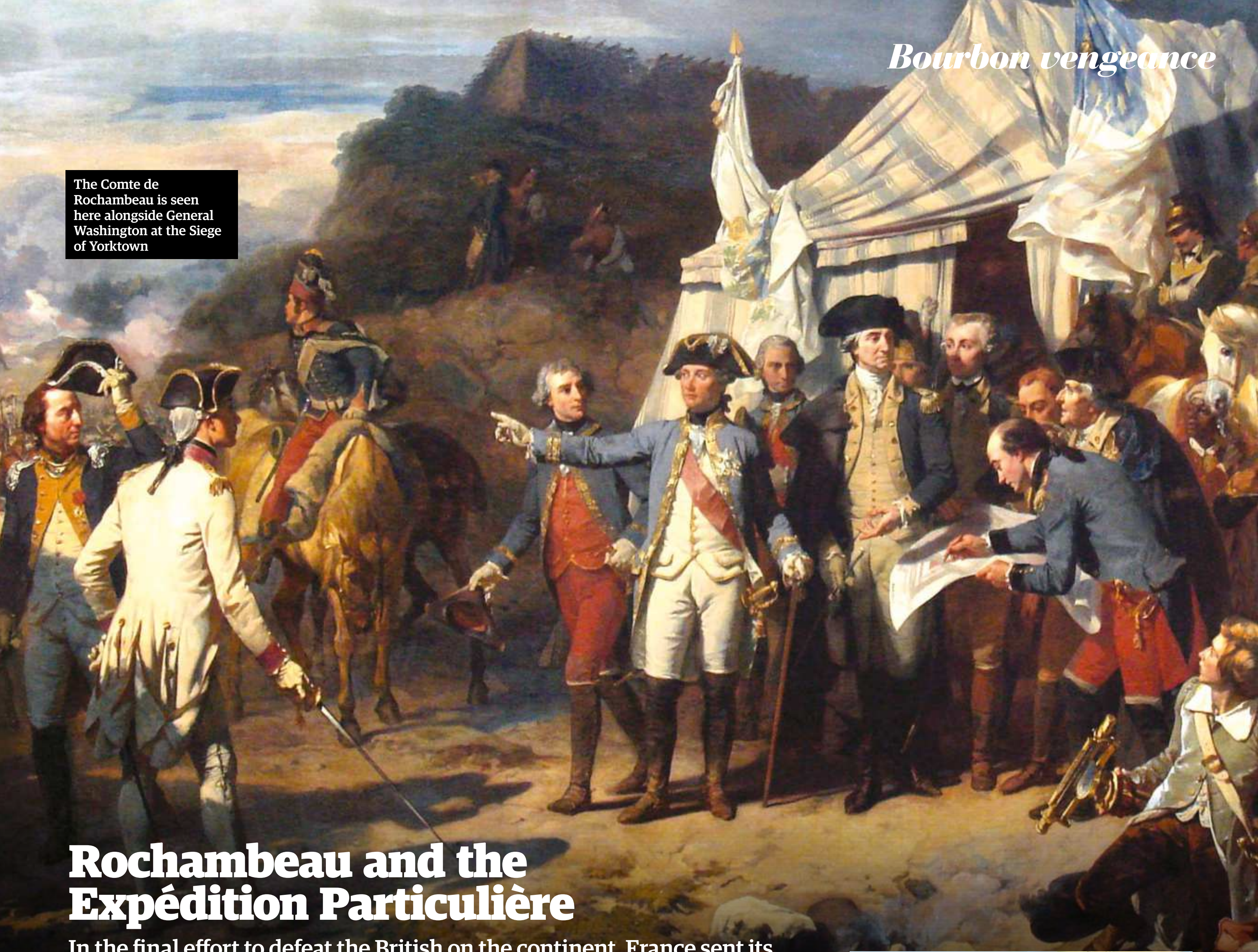
When the American rebels began casting around for the necessities of war in 1775, especially gunpowder, many European governments, put off by the arrogance of an overwhelmingly successful Britain, looked the other way. No war could be fought at all without gunpowder, but at one stage in August 1775, while besieging Boston, General George Washington received a report on the dire powder situation and was shocked into speechlessness for half an hour.

But the profit motive came to his army's rescue. Merchants in France, the Netherlands and Spain shipped substantial amounts of munitions to their own colonies in the Caribbean, such as France's Martinique, the Netherlands' St Eustatius and Spain's Santo Domingo, where waiting American merchants could acquire them. A single 100-pound powder barrel from Holland could be sold at four or five times its original cost once it had found its way across the Atlantic.

France was not willing to risk war with Britain by overtly supplying arms and munitions, yet it still wished to keep the American rebellion alive to vex its rival. Pierre de Beaumarchais, a watchmaker and playwright who had written The Barber Of Seville, provided the solution to this quandary. He had become close to independence-minded American colonists while in Britain on a minor diplomatic mission and was convinced of the need to supply them with more arms. He wrote to King Louis XVI that aid could be delivered secretly, in such a way that it would not compromise France. The Comte de Vergennes approved his plan, and in the late spring of 1776, Beaumarchais had established the dummy trading firm of Roderigue Hortalez and Company that outwardly took part in American commerce.

In truth, 1 million livres had been given to the company by King Louis to buy supplies for the Americans. Beaumarchais proved extremely energetic in organising the shipment of war supplies to the colonies. "My zeal will better supply my lack of capacity," he had assured the king, "than the ability of another could replace my zeal." Additional money came from Spain, which


The scene of the surrender of British General John Burgoyne at Saratoga on 17 October 1777



The Comte de Rochambeau is seen here alongside General Washington at the Siege of Yorktown

Rochambeau and the Expédition Particulière

In the final effort to defeat the British on the continent, France sent its own expeditionary army to fight alongside its American allies

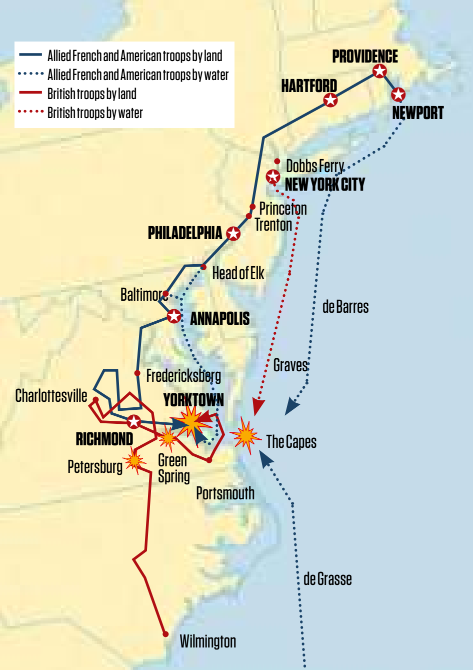
On 11 July 1780, the Comte de Rochambeau and more than 5,000 French soldiers landed on Rhode Island after a ten-week voyage from France. This 'Special Expedition' against the British in North America was intended to aid General George Washington further south. Washington, eager for French support, intended to launch a campaign against New York as soon as Rochambeau landed, however, the French force was suffering from sickness and fatigue after the arduous voyage.

> "During meetings between the two sides, Washington presented his urgent wish to take back New York City, which he had lost to the British in 1776"

The European army set up camp at Newport, on Rhode Island, which Rochambeau made his base. He travelled out to meet with Washington on 21 September, and realised with some despair just how ill equipped and small in number the Continental Army was. He quickly sent his son back to France to petition King Louis for more men and funds – he would not return until the following spring, with only the desperately needed money and no extra troops.

In the summer of 1781, the French expedition marched south and met with the Continental Army at White Plains in New York state. During several meetings between the two sides, Washington presented his urgent wish to take back New York City, which he had lost to the British in 1776. However, Rochambeau managed to persuade the general to march into Virginia, where their combined force could meet up with Admiral de Grasse's fleet. On 18 August 1781, the combined armies headed south in separate columns, in order to increase the pace of the march. By the start of October, the Siege of Yorktown was well underway, which would prove to be the end of the final significant British presence in the colonies.

Routes of Washington & Rochambeau 1781


Allied French and American troops by land
Allied French and American troops by water
British troops by land
British troops by water
PROVIDENCE
HARTFORD
NEWPORT
Dobbs Ferry
NEW YORK CITY
Princeton
Trenton
PHILADELPHIA
Head of Elk
Baltimore
ANNAPOLIS
de Barres
Graves
Fredericksberg
Charlottesville
YORKTOWN
RICHMOND
The Capes
Petersburg
Green Spring
Portsmouth
de Grasse
Wilmington

delivered 1 million livres to Beaumarchais in 1776 to buy armaments for the rebels.

Though Spain was officially neutral in the American dispute, royal policy was to have its governors in the New World arm the rebels with muskets and powder. The energetic playwright also brought on board private investors who contributed funds, and when Roderigue Hortalez 'opened' for business, it was capitalised at more than 3 million livres from all sources.

The Bourbon Compact

Despite his visceral desire to wound Britain, Vergennes was cautious, and advised his king to avoid a more-extensive role until the Americans showed that they had a chance to win. That demonstration came on 17 October 1777, when American forces defeated a British invading army at Saratoga, New York. This victory hardly destroyed British power in North America, but it did make the American cause seem altogether more viable to the French. The American bid for an official alliance with France, achieved in 1778, is justly famous for bringing to the revolutionary cause France's considerable wealth and military power. Without France, American independence would never have been won. But French power was itself not enough to guarantee British defeat – it would need Spanish help.

France and Spain had once been bitter rivals, back in the 17th century when Bourbon France and Habsburg Spain had fought for dominance in Europe. But this changed when Philip of the House of Bourbon ascended to the Spanish throne in 1700, leading to a recurring alliance between the two branches of the family, which became known as the Bourbon Compact.

The aggregate power of France and Spain was thereby a real challenge to Britain, especially at sea where the British maintained Europe's most powerful navy. But the combined fleets of France and Spain exceeded the Royal Navy in ships of the line, the most important class of warship.

The existence of the Bourbon Compact did not mean that Spain, under its reform-minded and cautious King Carlos III, would meekly follow France's lead or that Spanish entry into the war was automatic.

After the French and Americans had made their alliance, Spain offered to mediate between Britain and France. To Britain, it offered to remain neutral in exchange for the return of Gibraltar, the strategic speck of land at the mouth of the Mediterranean that had been lost in 1713 – but Spain's price was too high. Spain also had its own territorial interests and wanted something from France in return for its support against Britain. France would have to help it attain its goals and also commit to a joint invasion of Britain (no small undertaking) before Spain's sprawling colonial empire fell victim to British counterattacks. These demands were difficult for the French to accept, but Spanish aid

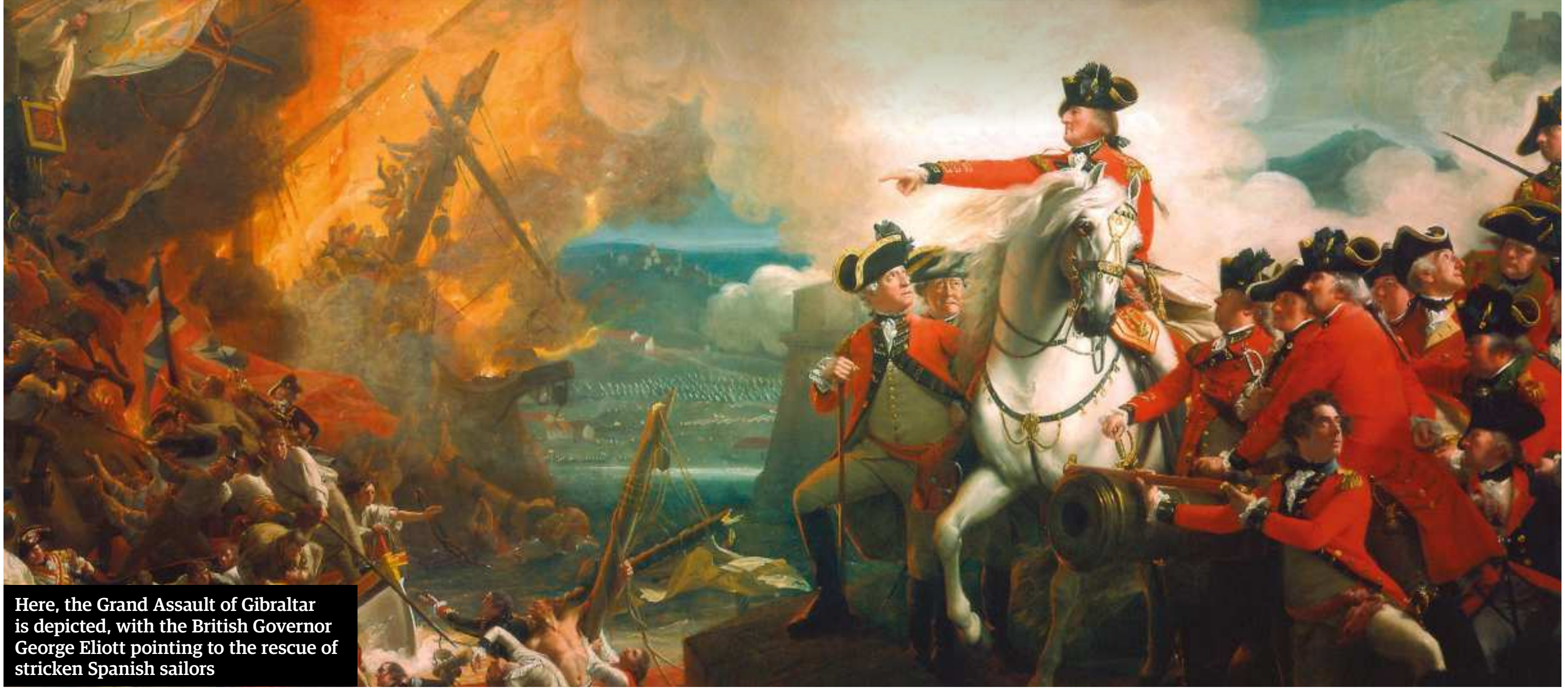
The great siege of Gibraltar

One of the largest clashes in the Revolution didn't even take place in North America

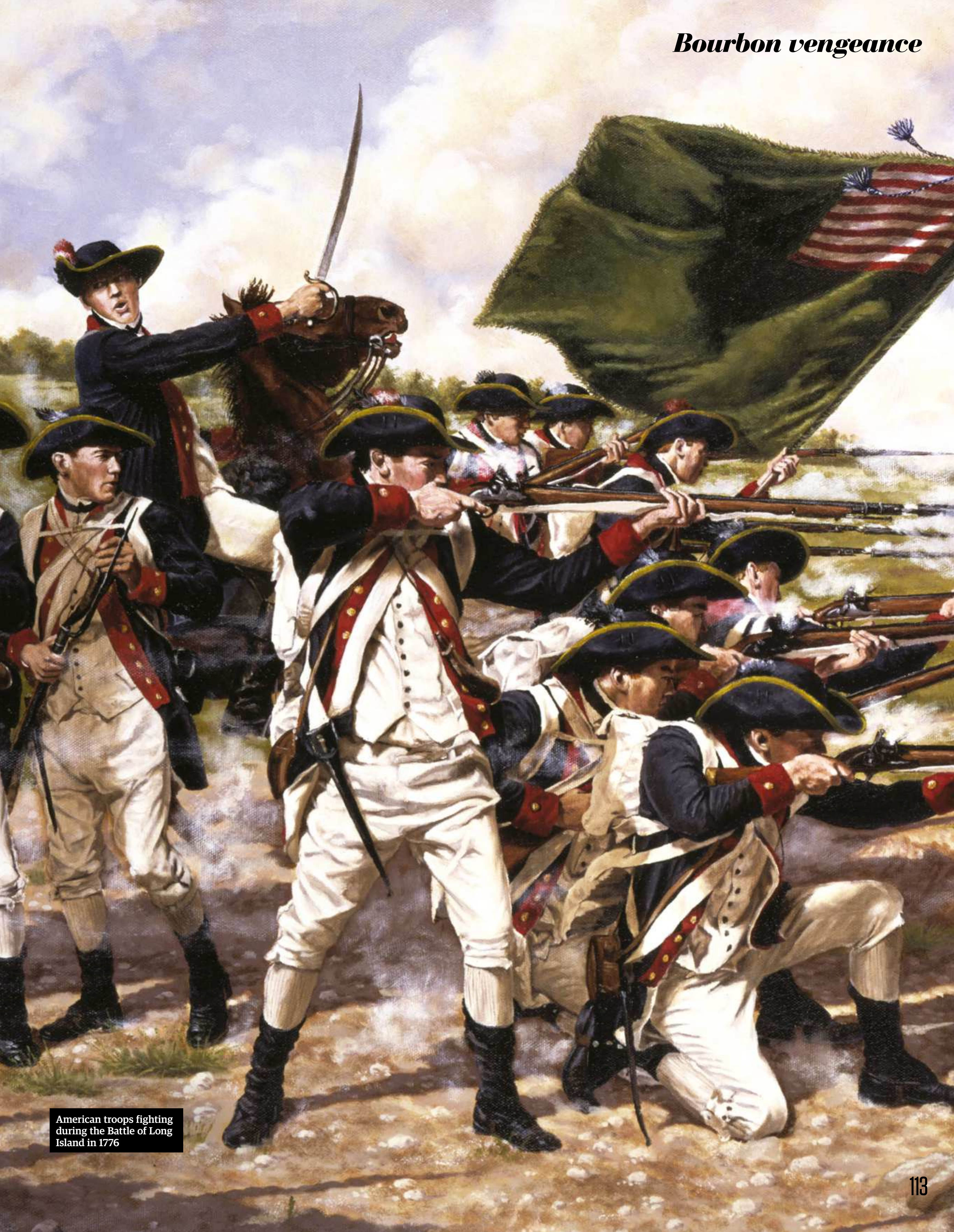
On 21 June 1779, Spanish forces attacked the unprepared garrison of Gibraltar in south Spain. This small rock, with a force of between 5,000 and 7,000 men, was a key British naval base in the region, and its loss would have meant a weakening of the Royal Navy's dominance at sea. In accordance with the Treaty of Aranjuez signed in April that year, which declared a mutual support between France and Spain against the British, the French fleet joined with the Spanish in order to blockade Gibraltar.

As Bernardo de Gálvez campaigned in North America to retake former Spanish territory, and Rochambeau's men made their way south to join with Washington and eventually begin the Yorktown campaign, the Siege of Gibraltar dragged on. In the spring of 1780, the British navy broke through the French and Spanish blockade, bringing with it vital supplies and more than 1,000 reinforcements. However, the siege soon began again in earnest and the garrison once again found itself desperately short of supplies. Nonetheless, with an abundance of gunpowder and gun batteries peering from within the hollowed-out cliff face of the rock, the defenders were able to deal out devastating fire on the enemy. Red-hot shot was loaded to set ships ablaze, while special depressing gun carriages were also used, so the cannons could be fired straight down upon the assaulting troops below.

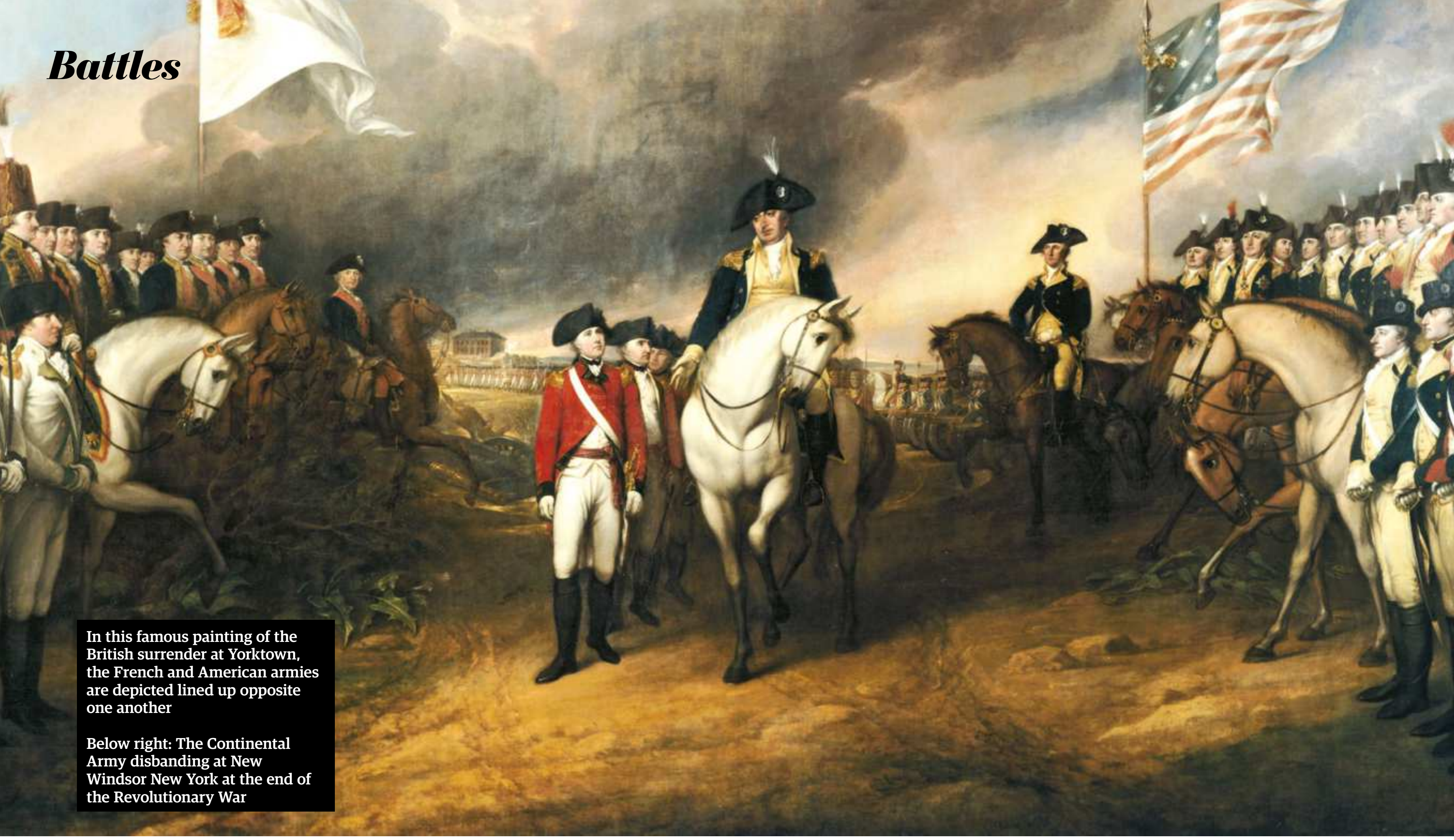
In 1782 a Grand Assault on the rock was planned, with a united French and Spanish army supported by the Combined Fleet. Thwarted by a sortie by the British defenders, under the command of Gibraltar's Governor George Eliott, the great attack was a failure. By 1783, some three years after it was first attacked, the siege was lifted and the French and Spanish armies retreated. Though this action ended in failure for the allies, it managed to open up yet another front to distract British resources, in particular its navy, from the American theatre.



Here, the Grand Assault of Gibraltar is depicted, with the British Governor George Eliott pointing to the rescue of stricken Spanish sailors



American troops fighting during the Battle of Long Island in 1776



In this famous painting of the British surrender at Yorktown, the French and American armies are depicted lined up opposite one another

Below right: The Continental Army disbanding at New Windsor New York at the end of the Revolutionary War

was absolutely required. Now that the war had been going on for several years, the Royal Navy quickly increased its total number of ships of the line at sea and had pulled far ahead of the French fleet. Without the addition of Spanish ships to its numbers, the French would have found themselves severely outnumbered. If the French fleet on its own had been defeated, the Royal Navy would have been free to strangle the American colonies with a tight blockade. France and Spain agreed to an alliance in April 1779, though Spain itself did not ever become the direct ally of the American colonies.

The Franco-Spanish alliance moved quickly to put pressure on the British. In July 1779, a combined French and Spanish invasion fleet departed from northern Spain for Britain and was anchored in the Channel by August. But the allied fleet lost contact with the British fleet and valuable time was wasted before it was found again. In the meantime, the British ships had sped back to the Channel. The delay proved costly. Preparations for the attack had been rushed, disease was ravaging the Spanish crews, and the allied ships already needed to be resupplied with food. The French and Spanish postponed their invasion, and their ships returned to port.

With the invasion plan scuttled, Spain turned its attention to Gibraltar. The siege began in June 1779, when all communications were cut between the Spanish and British garrisons. Britain had been taken by surprise by the Spanish move and had failed to provision its relatively small garrison. Easy resupply by sea was made impossible by patrolling Spanish warships and a Royal Navy relief mission under Admiral Sir George Rodney had to fight its way through fierce Spanish opposition to reach the rock in early 1780.

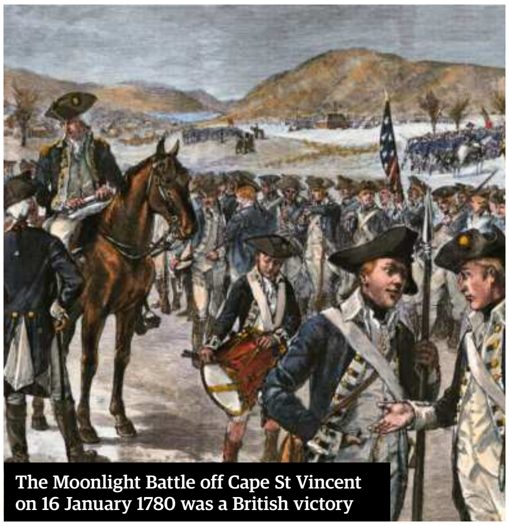
Spain used Britain's preoccupation with holding Gibraltar to strike elsewhere. In August 1781, a fleet was sent to capture Menorca, which fell when the British garrison capitulated in February 1782. British warships could not be everywhere at once, and while a second British relief fleet was on its way to Gibraltar, the French captured a British merchant convoy of 22 ships carrying cargoes worth almost £5 million. However, the Bourbons did not have everything their way. A massive combined Spanish and French assault on Gibraltar mounted in September 1782 was a catastrophic failure. Gibraltar would in fact never fall, but in the meantime its defence made Britain very vulnerable elsewhere. The direct threat posed by the French and Spanish navies to Britain required it to keep a powerful fleet in its home waters - warships that were not available for use against the American colonies.

The war in the West

After Spain's entry into the war, Britain's strategy was to attack its North American territories in a pincer movement, with one of their forces moving south from Detroit to seize St Louis, and another to move north up the Mississippi River. This would then cut off the American colonists from the rest of the continent and from the Spanish in the west.

Fortunately for Spain, its commander in Louisiana, Bernardo de Gálvez, was ready to thwart the British plan. Departing from New Orleans in August 1779, de Gálvez conducted a rapid march upriver, seizing Fort Bute, Baton Rouge, and Natchez. In March 1780, he took Mobile, and his forces prevented the British from capturing St Louis that May. In February 1781, the Spanish captured Fort St Joseph in Michigan, and in May took Pensacola, along with more than 1,100 prisoners. These attacks had the benefit of draining British manpower and preventing it from being used to reinforce Cornwallis's depleted army in the southern colonies.

De Gálvez performed another major service to the allied cause. When in June 1781 it had become known that Cornwallis had occupied Yorktown in Virginia, it was apparent to both de Gálvez and Admiral François-Joseph de Grasse that they had an evanescent chance to trap Cornwallis's army while the bulk of the Royal Navy was concentrated elsewhere.



The Moonlight Battle off Cape St Vincent on 16 January 1780 was a British victory

De Gálvez released the French fleet from its obligation to help him capture Jamaica – these ships were now free to play a decisive role in the final campaign of the war. Spain rendered a further signal assistance to Admiral de Grasse's naval endeavour in the form of money, which was in desperately short supply. Through an emergency appeal to the residents of Havana, Cuba, 500,000 pesos were raised in just one day to help fund the fleet's expedition to Virginia.

Back in Europe, in August and September 1781, a Franco-Spanish fleet of 66 ships of the line again massed off Britain, and the need to safeguard the home islands made it impossible for the Royal Navy to spare any ships to go to the aid of Cornwallis, who was now besieged by Washington at Yorktown.

> "All that remained was for the French and Spanish to exact as much vengeance as possible on their old enemy and cripple British power in the New World"

At the same time, the French fleet under Admiral de Grasse arrived in the Chesapeake Bay with troops to join Washington's army, effectively bottling up Cornwallis and preventing his much-needed reinforcement.

Then, on 5 September 1781, a British fleet of 19 ships under Admiral Thomas Graves arrived in Chesapeake Bay. After a tough battle with de Grasse's 24 ships, each side retired to lick its wounds. Though both fleets had been hurt in the battle, the British were left worse off and withdrew to New York for repairs. This left Cornwallis without any hope of rescue, and he surrendered to Washington that October. The American Revolution was effectively over and a new country was born.

The Battle of the Saintes

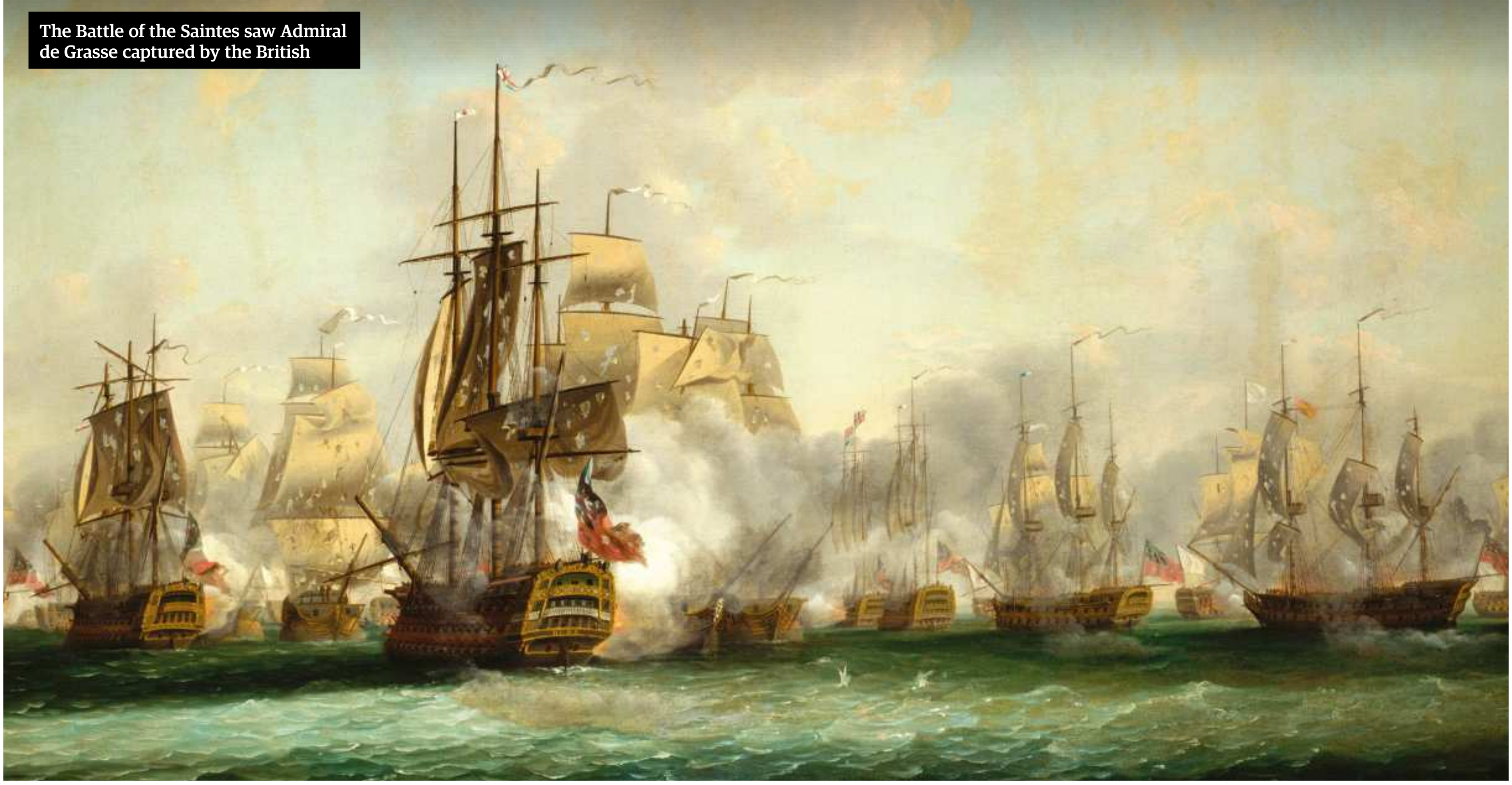
One of the final engagements of the war saw the French fleet humbled, while the British prevented a total disaster for ambitions in the Caribbean

After the surrender at Yorktown, British presence on the continent was all but extinguished. All that remained was for the French and Spanish to exact as much vengeance as possible on their old enemy and cripple British power in the New World. The Caribbean islands were important to both sides, with their rich sugar crops bringing in valuable trade and their strategically vital ports controlling sea traffic in the region.

After supporting the Yorktown campaign, and fending off the Royal Navy at the Battle of Chesapeake, Admiral de Grasse turned his attention to Britain's other power bases across the ocean. As Britain's most profitable and strategically vital island in the Caribbean, Jamaica became the next target of the French fleet. On 8 April 1782, de Grasse set sail with 35 ships of the line and 150 unarmed vessels to seize the island.

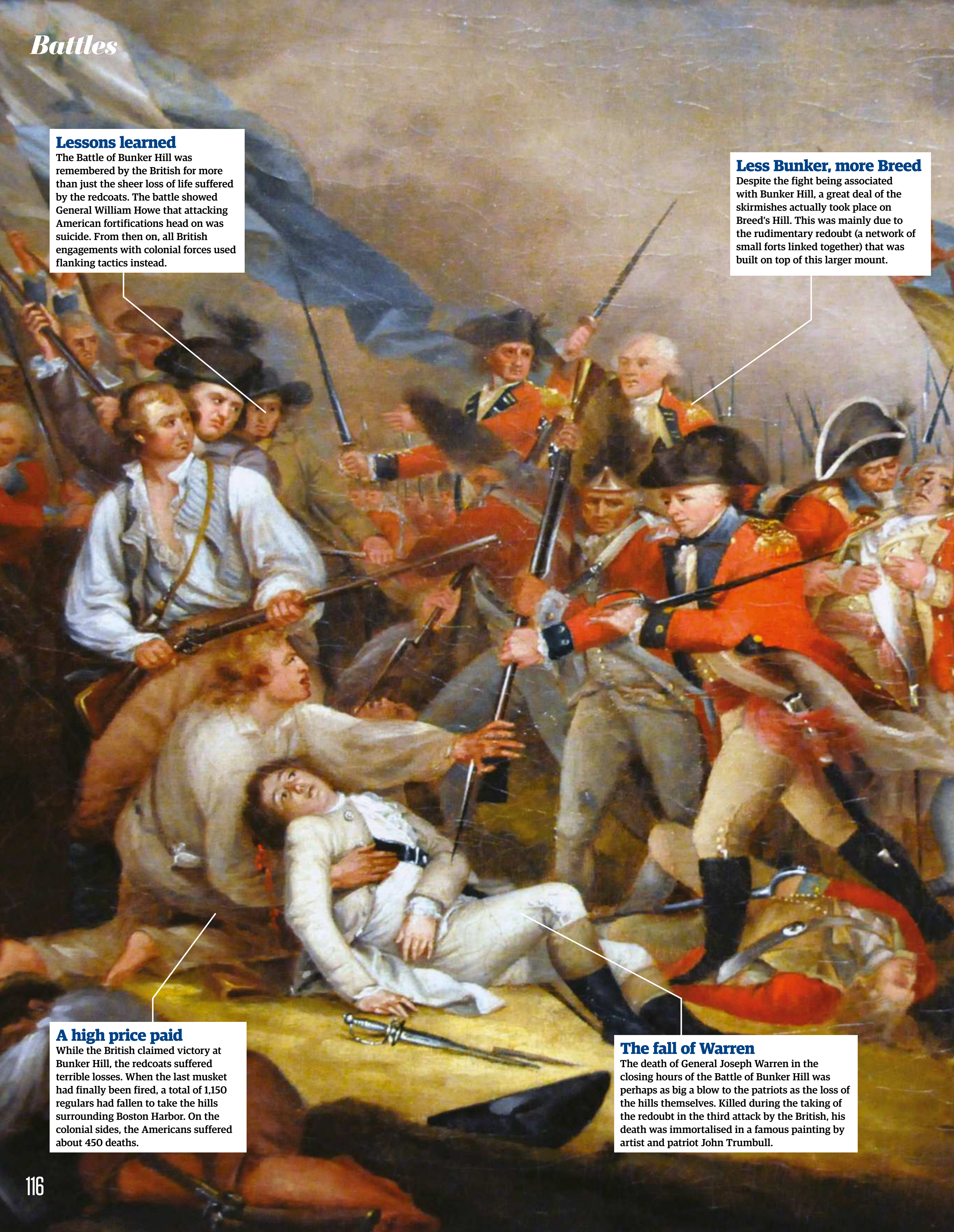
Rear Admiral Sir Samuel Hood pursued and caught the French fleet off the coast of Dominica on 9 April, forcing de Grasse to organise a hasty rearguard while his convoy escaped. During the brief engagements between the two fleets, a single French ship of the line was forced to retreat to make repairs, while the full complement of Hood's vessels continued the pursuit.

On 12 April, the two forces lined up for battle, de Grasse by now with only 30 ships to face Admiral George Rodney's 36 – Rodney had recently taken over from his subordinate. After a sudden change in the wind, the French formation was sent into disarray and the British sailed into the gaps that emerged, raking their enemy with fire from both sides. The French fleet fled and the flagship Ville de Paris was captured along with Admiral de Grasse – the first time a French commander-in-chief had been captured at sea. The man who had been so instrumental in the Yorktown campaign was now a prisoner or war, but more importantly for the British, the empire's islands in the West Indies were secure.



The Battle of the Saintes saw Admiral de Grasse captured by the British

Images: Alamy



Lessons learned

The Battle of Bunker Hill was remembered by the British for more than just the sheer loss of life suffered by the redcoats. The battle showed General William Howe that attacking American fortifications head on was suicide. From then on, all British engagements with colonial forces used flanking tactics instead.

Less Bunker, more Breed

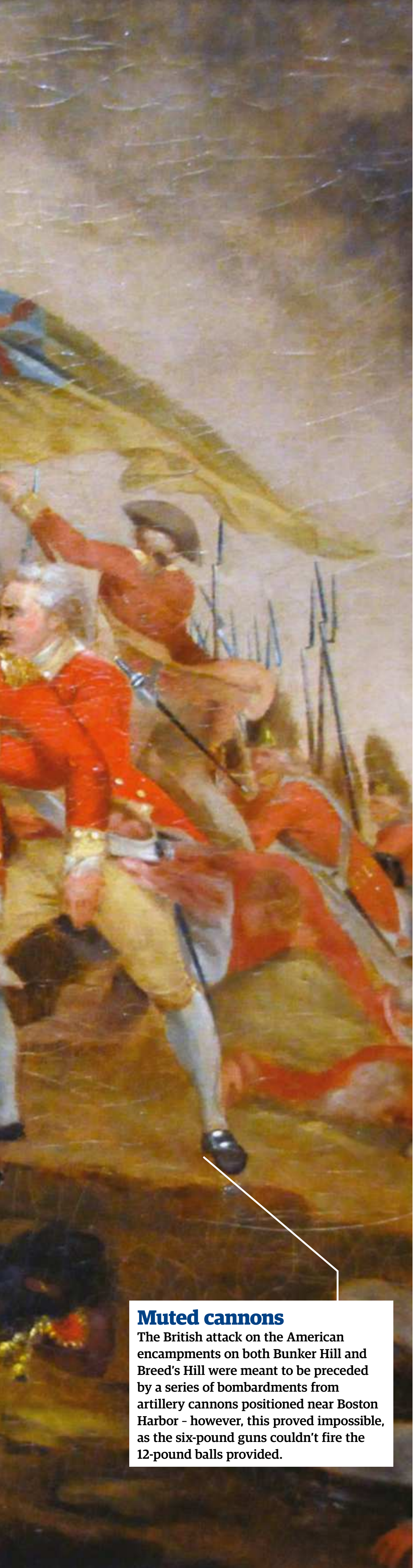
Despite the fight being associated with Bunker Hill, a great deal of the skirmishes actually took place on Breed's Hill. This was mainly due to the rudimentary redoubt (a network of small forts linked together) that was built on top of this larger mount.

A high price paid

While the British claimed victory at Bunker Hill, the redcoats suffered terrible losses. When the last musket had finally been fired, a total of 1,150 regulars had fallen to take the hills surrounding Boston Harbor. On the colonial sides, the Americans suffered about 450 deaths.

The fall of Warren

The death of General Joseph Warren in the closing hours of the Battle of Bunker Hill was perhaps as big a blow to the patriots as the loss of the hills themselves. Killed during the taking of the redoubt in the third attack by the British, his death was immortalised in a famous painting by artist and patriot John Trumbull.



Muted cannons
The British attack on the American encampments on both Bunker Hill and Breed's Hill were meant to be preceded by a series of bombardments from artillery cannons positioned near Boston Harbor – however, this proved impossible, as the six-pound guns couldn't fire the 12-pound balls provided.

Bunker Hill

American Revolutionary War, Charlestown, Massachusetts

The American Revolutionary War was barely a month and a half into its inception, and while the butchery and mass loss of life that would tear the nation asunder lay ahead in the dark eight years to come, the forces of the Kingdom of Great Britain and the rebellion militiamen of the colonialists were prepared for one of the first formal clashes of arms.

In the wake of the Battles of Lexington and Concord – which saw the colonials drive British forces into Charlestown and across the Charles River into Boston, effectively starting the patriot-led Siege of Boston – the British couldn't allow for another defeat at the hands of the rebels. By 19 April 1775, a force of 15,000 men surrounded the towns, cutting off supplies and access via land. Thankfully for the small contingent of redcoats stationed there under the command of General Thomas Gage, Boston still had access to the fully prepared Boston Harbor. The Charles River was dominated by British warships, meaning the city could be supplied indefinitely.

However, a large contingent of colonial forces occupying the hills and ridges of the Charlestown Peninsula could not be tolerated. If the colonials managed to obtain and manoeuvre artillery pieces onto these hills, they would have the capability to bombard the city and drive the British to retreat onto the waters to surrender. Geographically, the Charlestown Peninsula was 1.6 kilometres long (one mile) from its isthmus (a small, neck-like opening of land) to its tip. It consisted of raised hills and ridges, with Breed's Hill to the south and Bunker Hill to the north. Small it may have been, but controlling it had the potential to accelerate Washington's siege and pummel Boston into patriot hands.

As May arrived, British reinforcements began to roll in by sea, eventually increasing the population of redcoat soldiers to about 6,000. Later that month, on 25 May, three British generals arrived in Boston aboard the HMS Cerberus. Gage had requested the presence of more generals as he had little intention of staying put in Boston while the patriots amassed its forces outside. Those generals, William Howe, Henry Clinton and John Burgoyne, were ordered to assist Gage in breaking out of the city and bringing the fight direct to the colonials.

By June, Gage, Howe, Clinton and Burgoyne had drawn up a plan to drive the patriots out. They intended to take the Dorchester Neck, thus fortifying the vulnerable Dorchester Heights. British forces would then progress onto Roxbury and meet the colonial forces there. Simultaneously, another force would flank the Charleston Heights and push to drive the colonials out of Cambridge. The plan was soon thrown out of the window when the British spied militiamen activity on the hills across from the city. That activity consisted of 1,200 colonials under the command of Colonel William Prescott and led to the construction of a fort-like network of barriers around Breed's Hill. The redoubt was square in shape, roughly 40 metres deep with 1.8 metre-high walls. It wasn't the sturdiest of structures, but its high elevation and proximity to Boston provided a powerful advantage should the patriots manage to set cannons upon it.

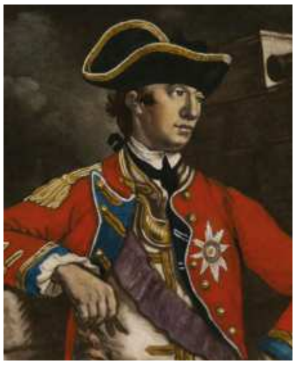
While the British thought it little cause for concern to begin with, the steady increase of patriot soldiers made one thing clear: the colonials meant to move on Boston. For the British, something *had* to be done.

> When the Patriots ran out of ammunition during battle, they began throwing rocks at their enemies

Great Britain

TROOPS 3,000

CASUALTIES 1,150



WILLIAM HOWE

LEADER

While Gage was in charge of protecting Boston, defeating the encroaching patriots fell to British Army officer William Howe.

Strengths Known for his daring military feats.

Weakness He was prone to underestimating his opponents.

52ND (OXFORDSHIRE) REGIMENT ON FOOT

UNIT

The 52nd were some of the main infantry groups used.

Strengths Well trained and readily supplied, the redcoats were far more physically prepared.

Weakness Struggled without cavalry or cannon support.

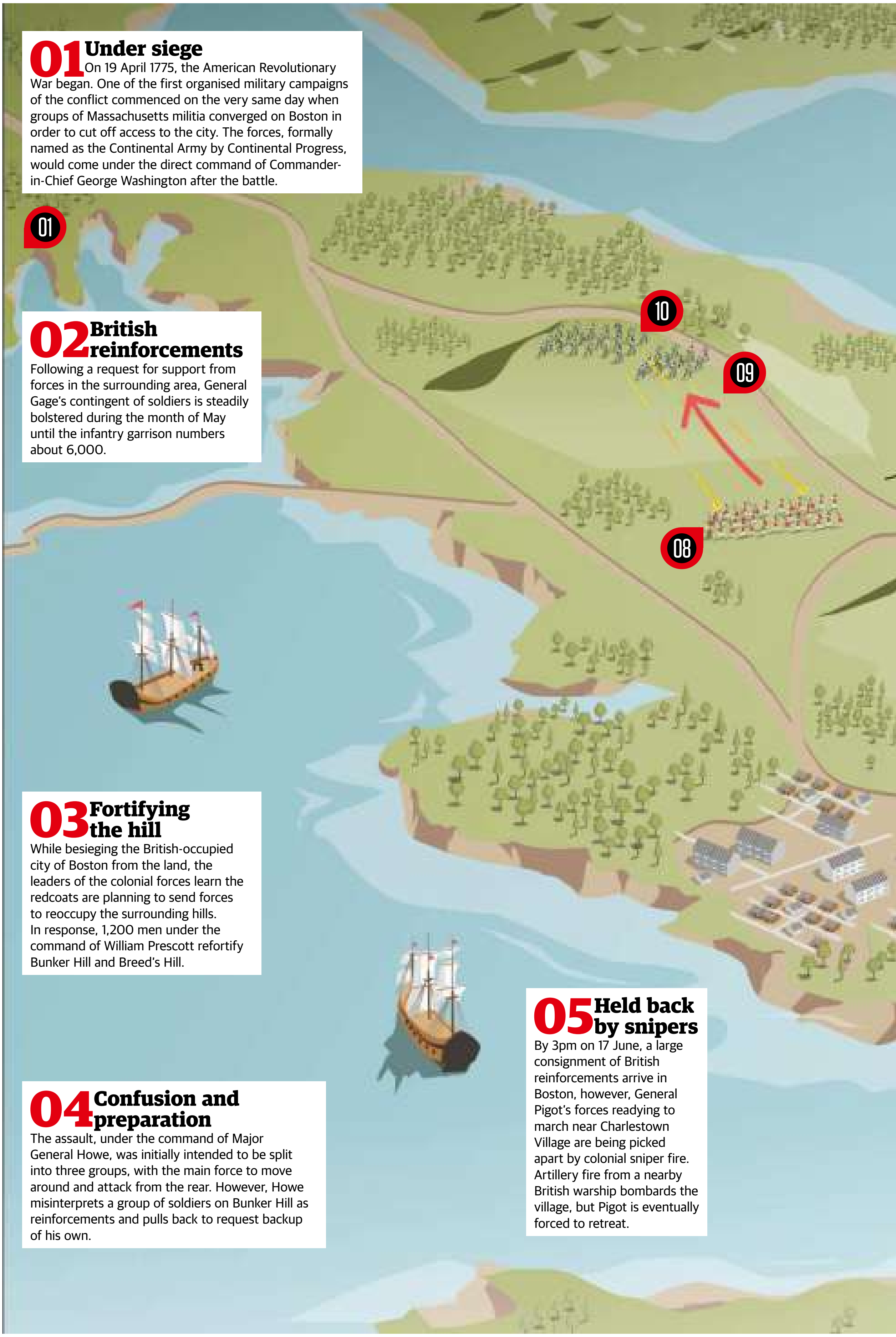
BAYONET

KEY WEAPON

When the British broke through the redoubt, they made short work of the patriots with their muskets.

Strengths Ideal weapon for close-quarters combat.

Weakness More cumbersome to carry in battle.



01 Under siege

On 19 April 1775, the American Revolutionary War began. One of the first organised military campaigns of the conflict commenced on the very same day when groups of Massachusetts militia converged on Boston in order to cut off access to the city. The forces, formally named as the Continental Army by Continental Progress, would come under the direct command of Commander-in-Chief George Washington after the battle.

02 British reinforcements

Following a request for support from forces in the surrounding area, General Gage's contingent of soldiers is steadily bolstered during the month of May until the infantry garrison numbers about 6,000.

03 Fortifying the hill

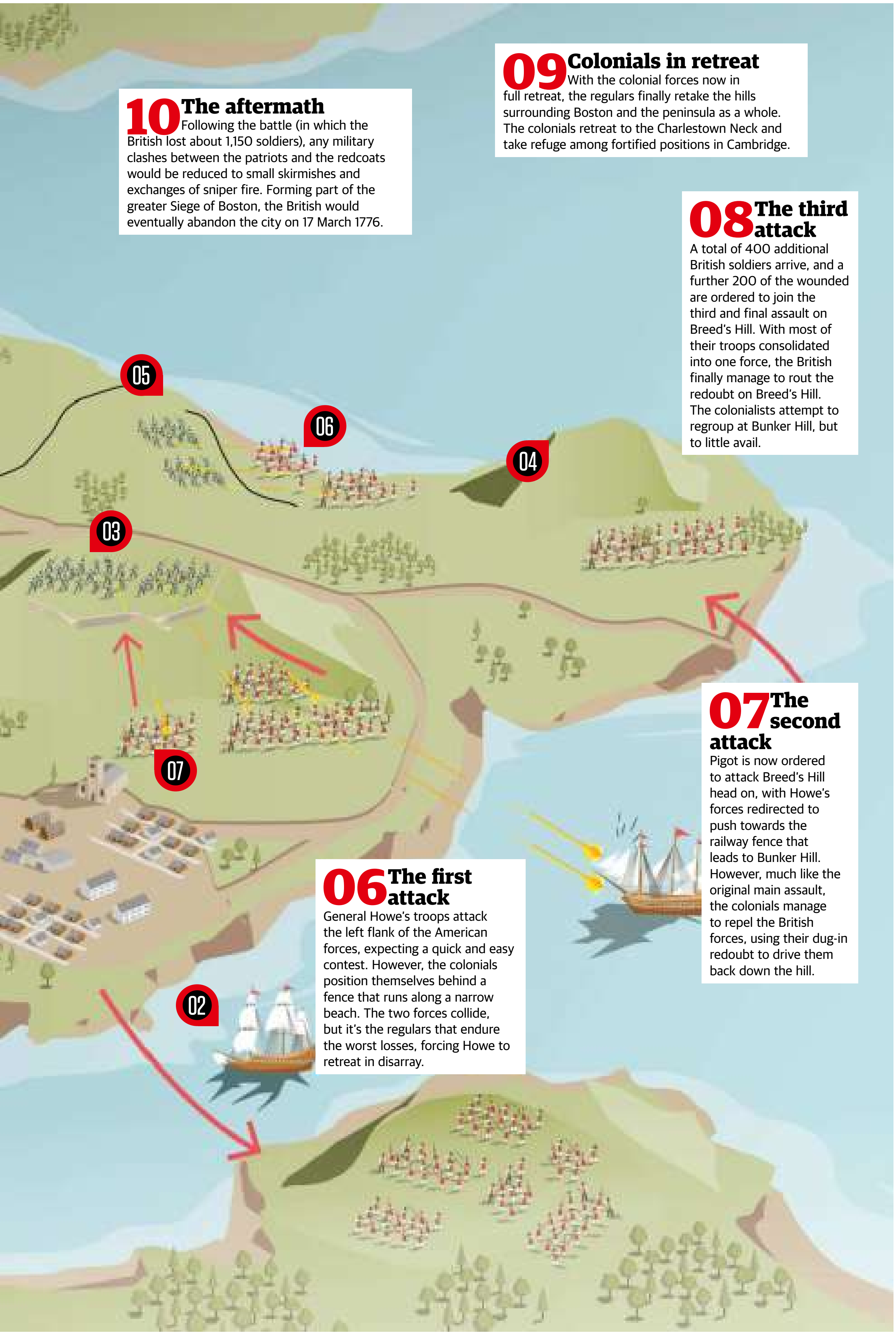
While besieging the British-occupied city of Boston from the land, the leaders of the colonial forces learn the redcoats are planning to send forces to reoccupy the surrounding hills. In response, 1,200 men under the command of William Prescott refortify Bunker Hill and Breed's Hill.

04 Confusion and preparation

The assault, under the command of Major General Howe, was initially intended to be split into three groups, with the main force to move around and attack from the rear. However, Howe misinterprets a group of soldiers on Bunker Hill as reinforcements and pulls back to request backup of his own.

05 Held back by snipers

By 3pm on 17 June, a large consignment of British reinforcements arrive in Boston, however, General Pigot's forces readying to march near Charlestown Village are being picked apart by colonial sniper fire. Artillery fire from a nearby British warship bombards the village, but Pigot is eventually forced to retreat.



06 The first attack

General Howe's troops attack the left flank of the American forces, expecting a quick and easy contest. However, the colonials position themselves behind a fence that runs along a narrow beach. The two forces collide, but it's the regulars that endure the worst losses, forcing Howe to retreat in disarray.

07 The second attack

Pigot is now ordered to attack Breed's Hill head on, with Howe's forces redirected to push towards the railway fence that leads to Bunker Hill. However, much like the original main assault, the colonials manage to repel the British forces, using their dug-in redoubt to drive them back down the hill.

08 The third attack

A total of 400 additional British soldiers arrive, and a further 200 of the wounded are ordered to join the third and final assault on Breed's Hill. With most of their troops consolidated into one force, the British finally manage to rout the redoubt on Breed's Hill. The colonialists attempt to regroup at Bunker Hill, but to little avail.

09 Colonials in retreat

With the colonial forces now in full retreat, the regulars finally retake the hills surrounding Boston and the peninsula as a whole. The colonials retreat to the Charlestown Neck and take refuge among fortified positions in Cambridge.

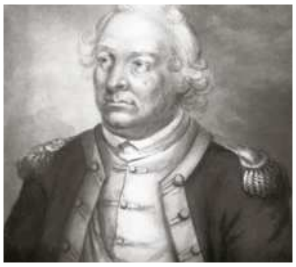
10 The aftermath

Following the battle (in which the British lost about 1,150 soldiers), any military clashes between the patriots and the redcoats would be reduced to small skirmishes and exchanges of sniper fire. Forming part of the greater Siege of Boston, the British would eventually abandon the city on 17 March 1776.

United Colonies

TROOPS 1,500

CASUALTIES 450



ISRAEL PUTNAM

LEADER

Alongside Colonel William Prescott, Putnam led the forces that attempted to repel troops on Breed's Hill.

Strengths A highly skilled tactician and strategist.

Weakness Known to work his men to exhaustion.

6TH MASSACHUSETTS REGIMENT

UNIT

The 6th were raised in June 1775 to form the Continental Army.

Strengths Made of local men with a greater knowledge of the area.

Weakness Not as well drilled as the British.

SIX-POUND CANNON

KEY WEAPON

While not used in the battle fully, the threat of cannons on both sides accelerated the pace of the battle.

Strengths The power to pummel cities as well as troops.

Weakness Muzzle loaded and smooth bored, making them highly inaccurate when fired.

© Edwards Crooks, Alamy

The Tale of Ticonderoga

Fort Ticonderoga, situated on the shores of Lake Champlain, was a focal point of rivalry and revolution among the British, French and Americans

In the early days of the French and Indian War, as the Seven Years' War in North America is known, control of the Hudson and St. Lawrence River valleys was of paramount importance to both the British and French. The region was also destined to play a pivotal role in the American Revolution a decade later.

Lines of supply and communication, routes of invasion, the ease of facilitating working relationships with allied Native Americans and continuing British incursions prompted the French to survey the southern shore of Lake Champlain in northeastern New York to determine a site for a fortified position to guard the portage between Lake George and Lake Champlain along the La Chute River against attack.

In 1755, Pierre de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil-Cavagnial, governor general of New France, commissioned his cousin, military engineer Michel Chartier de Lotbinière, to construct a fortress that would discourage British ventures and protect French interests in the region. Lotbiniére chose a location amid numerous mountain peaks that he believed would dominate the countryside, guarding both the landward approaches and traffic on Lake Champlain.

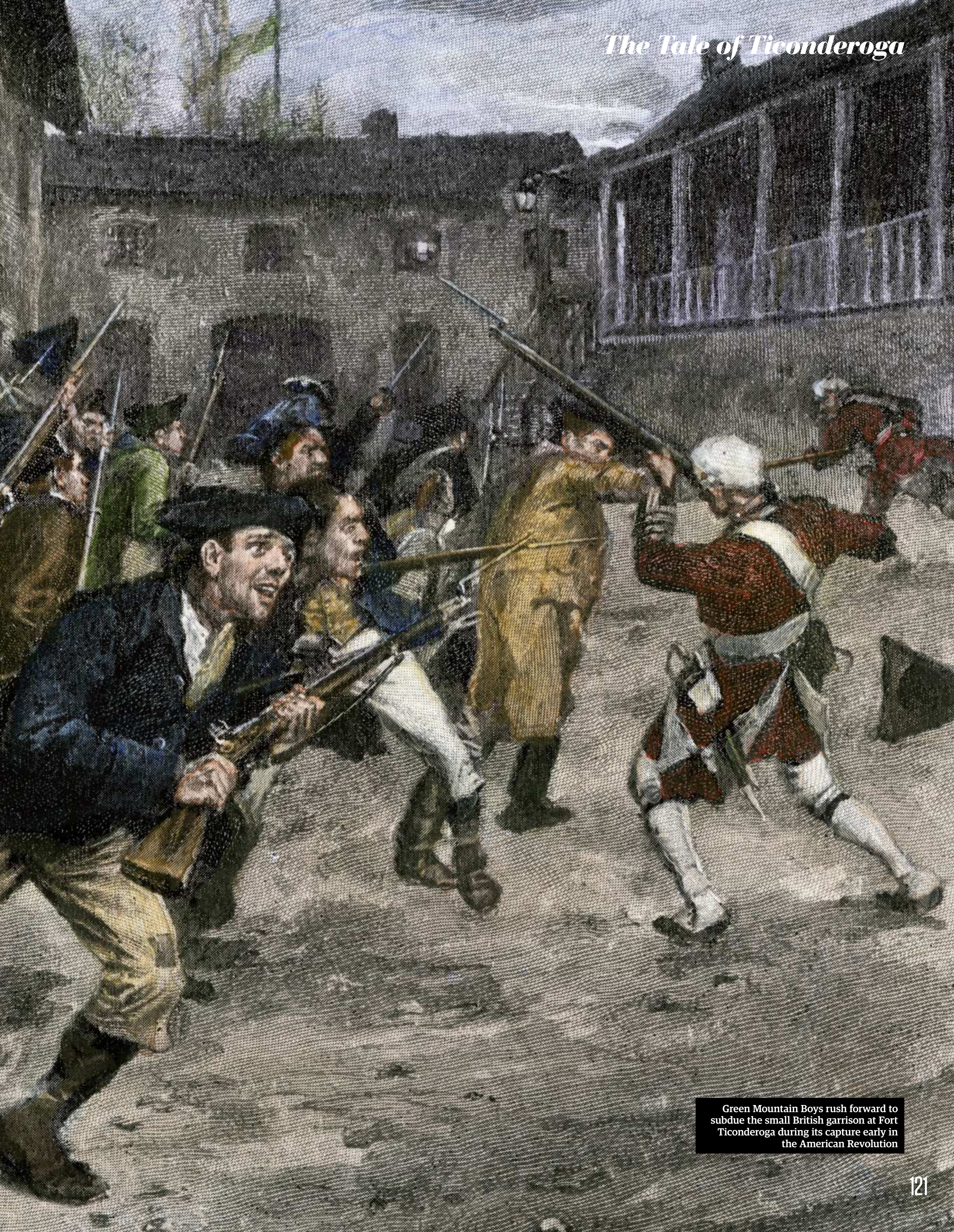
Construction began in 1755, and the plans called for a star fortification patterned after those designed by acclaimed military engineer Sébastien Le Prestre de Vauban. Completed in the spring of 1758, the stone structure was christened Fort Carillon. Although it appeared impregnable, French officers, particularly General Louis-Joseph de Montcalm, who later led an army to defeat at Québec, did criticise its location and layout. The buildings were too tall, making easy targets for enemy artillery, while the surrounding mountains might invite the British to move cannon up their slopes and threaten plunging fire that would make the position untenable.

The walls of the fort were over two metres high and 4.3 metres thick and surrounded by a glacis and a dry moat

War comes to Carillon

During the French and Indian War, a French expedition laid siege to Fort William Henry and captured the British position on Lake George. That offensive had originated at Fort Carillon, prompting British retaliation. In the summer of 1758, General James Abercromby led 17,000 British and colonial soldiers against Fort Carillon, garrisoned by 3,700 French soldiers inside the fort and occupying surrounding entrenchments.

Abercromby ordered a frontal assault on 8 July, 1758, and was sharply repulsed, losing nearly 2,000 soldiers. Particularly hard hit were the Black Watch Regiment, the Highlanders and the 42nd Regiment of Foot. Following the British



Green Mountain Boys rush forward to subdue the small British garrison at Fort Ticonderoga during its capture early in the American Revolution

"A single sentry fled his post with the onrush of the Americans, and the Green Mountain Boys swiftly entered the fort"

withdrawal, Fort Carillon was strengthened with two additional redoubts, enhancing its reputation as an impregnable stronghold. When the British threat diminished, the French left only a small contingent at Fort Carillon.

A year later, the British returned. General Jeffrey Amherst led 11,000 soldiers against only 400 French troops. The French abandoned the fort after blowing up the powder magazine. When Amherst took possession he renamed the fortress Ticonderoga, a corruption of an Iroquois (a Native American confederacy) word meaning 'where the waters meet' or 'between two waters'.

Ticonderoga and revolution

After the French and Indian War, Fort Ticonderoga fell into disrepair. Colonial settlers from New England ventured into the region in ever-growing numbers, particularly in the 'Hampshire Grants', the modern state of Vermont. Conflict involving land rights flared into violence as Ethan Allen, a land speculator, theologian and farmer, led the Green Mountain Boys (a group organised to oppose settlers coming from New York) in burning homesteads, threatening individuals, and defying the New York government's attempts to assert control over the Ticonderoga territory.

When the American Revolution broke out, Ticonderoga, despite its dilapidated condition, maintained a reputation as the 'Gibraltar of America' and drew the attention of colonial military strategists. Although it was occupied only by a token force of two officers and 46 soldiers, Ticonderoga housed heavy cannon that might be useful in the growing conflict.

One of the first to notice the opportunity that Ticonderoga presented was Benedict Arnold, future general in the Continental Army and infamous traitor. Arnold convinced the Massachusetts Committee of Safety to commission him as a colonel with authorisation to command a raid to capture the fort.

Accompanied by two captains, Jonathan Brown and Eleazer Oswald, Arnold hurried north to recruit 400 men to take part in the capture of Fort Ticonderoga. En route Arnold learned that Allen and around 100 Green Mountain Boys were already moving against the fort, knowing its capture would greatly strengthen their ability to resist settlers from New York coming into the Hampshire Grants. Revolutionary fervour also stoked their enthusiasm.

Arnold rode hard and caught up with Allen and the Boys along with about 60 men from the Grants and Connecticut. Arnold produced his commission, declaring that he was in command of the operation. The Green Mountain Boys objected and stated that they would follow only Allen into a fight. There is no record of a parlay, but Arnold and Allen apparently agreed to command jointly, satisfying the men.

To take Ticonderoga

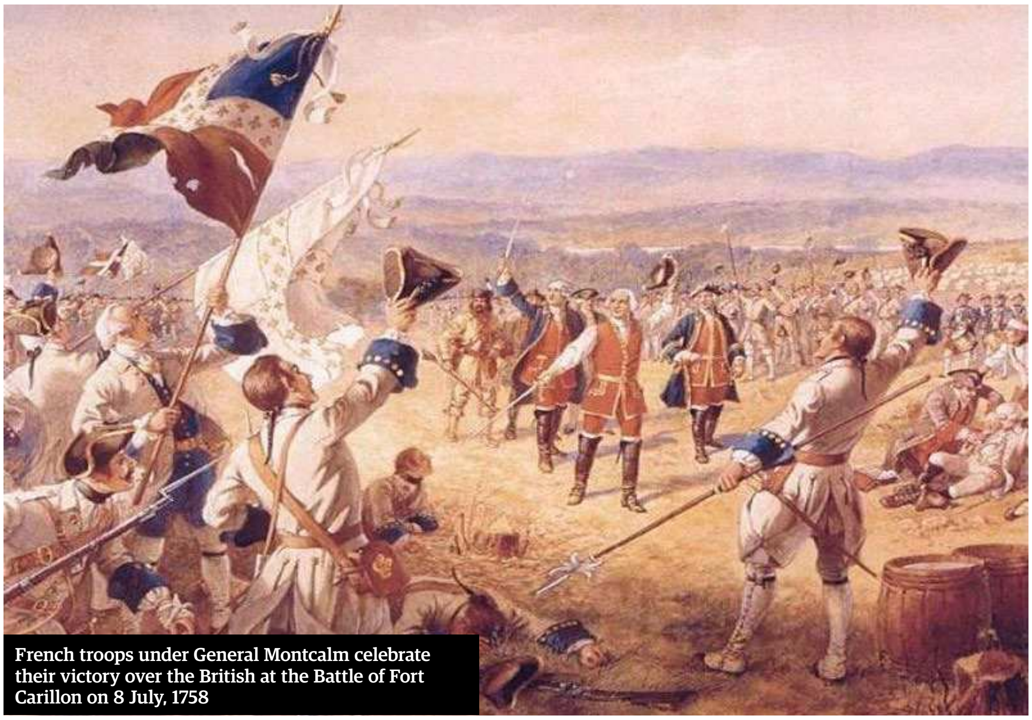
At 11:30pm, on the night of 9 May, 1775, just weeks after the revolution had begun, Allen, Arnold and their comrades assembled at Hand's Cove. Three hours later 83 Green Mountain Boys were being ferried across Lake Champlain, but the impending sunrise jeopardised the element of surprise. Deciding to attack with the available men, the patriots moved out.

A single sentry fled his post with the onrush of the Americans, and the Green Mountain Boys swiftly entered the fort. As Allen, Arnold, and a few men rushed up the stairs toward the officers' quarters, Lieutenant Jocelyn Feltham, an aide to Captain William Delaplace, the fort's commander, asked under whose authority the invaders were acting. Allen responded (although he later asserted the comment was to Delaplace), "In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress!"

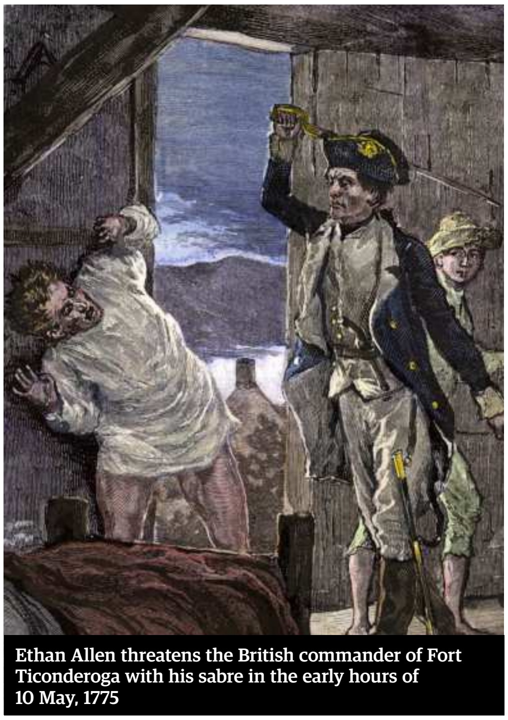
In later years when Allen recounted the event he said that he bellowed to Delaplace, "Come out you old rat!" There were no fatalities, but a couple of men were injured, one reportedly by Allen's own rifle butt and another by a British bayonet. The Green Mountain Boys proceeded to plunder the liquor stores and other provisions within the fort, and Arnold was powerless to stop them. He reported to the Massachusetts government that the militiamen were "governing by whim and caprice".

Guns to Boston

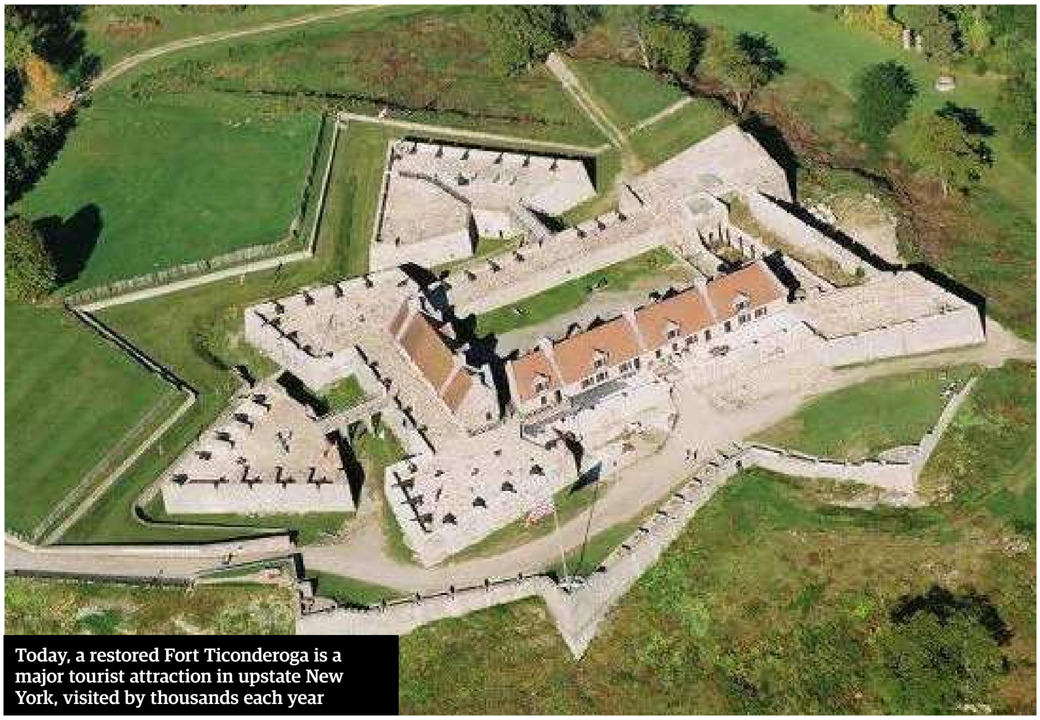
Although Arnold had feared that a grander plan to remove the cannon from Fort Ticonderoga might fail amid the lack of discipline, control of the fort did assure that the guns would be put to good use. Many of them were transferred to the vicinity of Boston in the ensuing months, where the fledgling



French troops under General Montcalm celebrate their victory over the British at the Battle of Fort Carillon on 8 July, 1758



Ethan Allen threatens the British commander of Fort Ticonderoga with his sabre in the early hours of 10 May, 1775



Today, a restored Fort Ticonderoga is a major tourist attraction in upstate New York, visited by thousands each year

Continental Army under George Washington had besieged the British garrison.

Under the supervision of Colonel Henry Knox, Washington's future chief of artillery, the guns were relocated over rough terrain, manhandled across mountain peaks and pulled by oxen to Dorchester Heights. Their placement rendered the British position in Boston vulnerable to artillery fire while their supply lines were dangerously exposed. On 17 March, 1776, the British evacuated Boston.

The early victory for the Americans was made possible by the capture of Fort Ticonderoga. Without the American heavy cannon in place, the British might have broken the siege of Boston and put the rebellion down swiftly. Some historians consider the capture of Ticonderoga the first significant victory of the Revolutionary War.

In the summer of 1775, Ticonderoga was used as a staging area for an ill-fated American invasion of Canada. The offensive was launched in August and met with defeat the following spring after British troops raised the siege of Québec City. British forces pursued the retreating Americans and defeated a naval force on Lake Champlain commanded by Arnold in the Battle of Valcour Island in October 1776. As winter set in the British were unable to follow up their victory and both sides retired. Roughly 1,700 American soldiers wintered at Fort Ticonderoga and nearby Fort Crown Point.

In the spring of 1777, General John Burgoyne led nearly 8,000 men in a three-pronged British offensive to isolate New England from the rest of the rebellious colonies. The abortive Saratoga campaign resulted in a key defeat for the British. However, they did manage to recapture Fort Ticonderoga when General Arthur St. Clair evacuated his small force as Burgoyne sent cannon up the surrounding heights.

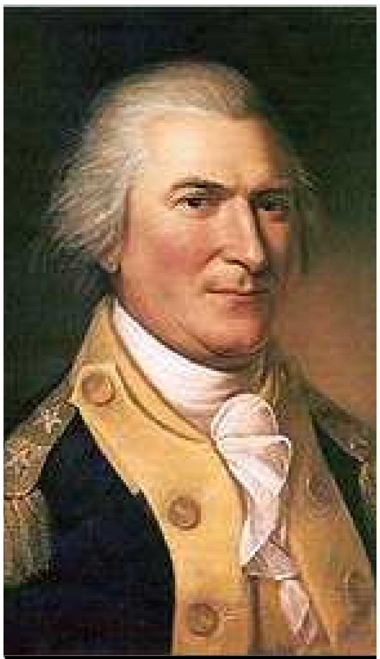
> The fort had four storehouses and three barracks, while one of its bastions housed a bakery and the other a powder magazine

The last hurrah

To follow up on the Saratoga victory, Colonel John Brown led American troops into the mountains to harass the British and test the defences at Fort Ticonderoga. Operations showed promise at first as the Americans freed comrades held by the British and captured nearly 300 soldiers, including a construction crew building a blockhouse on nearby Mount Defiance.

The Americans were too weak to assault Fort Ticonderoga directly, and a stalemate ensued. By October Brown had decided that he'd had enough and withdrew his command. The fort remained under British control for the duration of the war, but the focus of military operations shifted away and its strategic significance was greatly diminished as a result. In November 1777, the British finally abandoned both Ticonderoga and Crown Point.

As time passed, Fort Ticonderoga slipped again into disrepair and obscurity. Then, in 1820 the family of a keen botanist by the name of William Ferris Pell purchased the property, later turning their residence into a hotel to accommodate a growing number of tourists. Restoration work later took place, and historic Fort Ticonderoga now hosts thousands of visitors each year.



General Arthur St. Clair abandoned Fort Ticonderoga in 1777 and faced a court martial for his decision to do so the following year

Sad story of St. Clair

The Americans had been in possession of Fort Ticonderoga for two years when General John Burgoyne's 8,000-man British Army advanced from Canada in the summer of 1777 during his ill-fated Saratoga campaign. Burgoyne made preparations to lay siege to the fortress, ordering heavy artillery to be hauled up the surrounding mountains. The Achilles heel of Fort Ticonderoga was well known to the British, and those heavy guns might rain plunging fire on the fort.

The American commander, General Arthur St. Clair (who was born in Thurso in Scotland in 1737), evacuated the fort without a fight on 5 July, 1777. For this command decision, he was court martialled the following year. Although he was cleared of the charges his reputation was damaged, and he did not command troops in the field for the rest of the war. General George Washington believed in his capabilities, however, and retained St. Clair as his aide. It was St. Clair who had recommended the successful manoeuvre and attack against the British at Princeton, New Jersey, in early 1777 that resulted in a stunning victory.

After the war St. Clair's fortunes faded one again. In 1791, he commanded a force that was surprised by Native American warriors in western Ohio and lost 900 men. St. Clair barely escaped with his life. Again, though, he was cleared of wrongdoing. His career effectively ended with the election of President Thomas Jefferson, who replaced him as governor of the Ohio Territory with a member of his own political party. St. Clair died in poverty in Pennsylvania in 1818 at the age of 81.

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Daring deception: Trenton and Princeton

Desperate for military successes that might bolster flagging morale and energise the Patriot cause, George Washington gambled in the winter of 1776-77

For the upstart Americans that dared wage war against the crown, the optimism that accompanied the banishment of the British from Boston was short-lived. By the autumn of 1776, General George Washington and the Continental Army had been battered and beaten, driven from New York and northern New Jersey in a renewed offensive led by General William Howe, commander of British forces in North America.

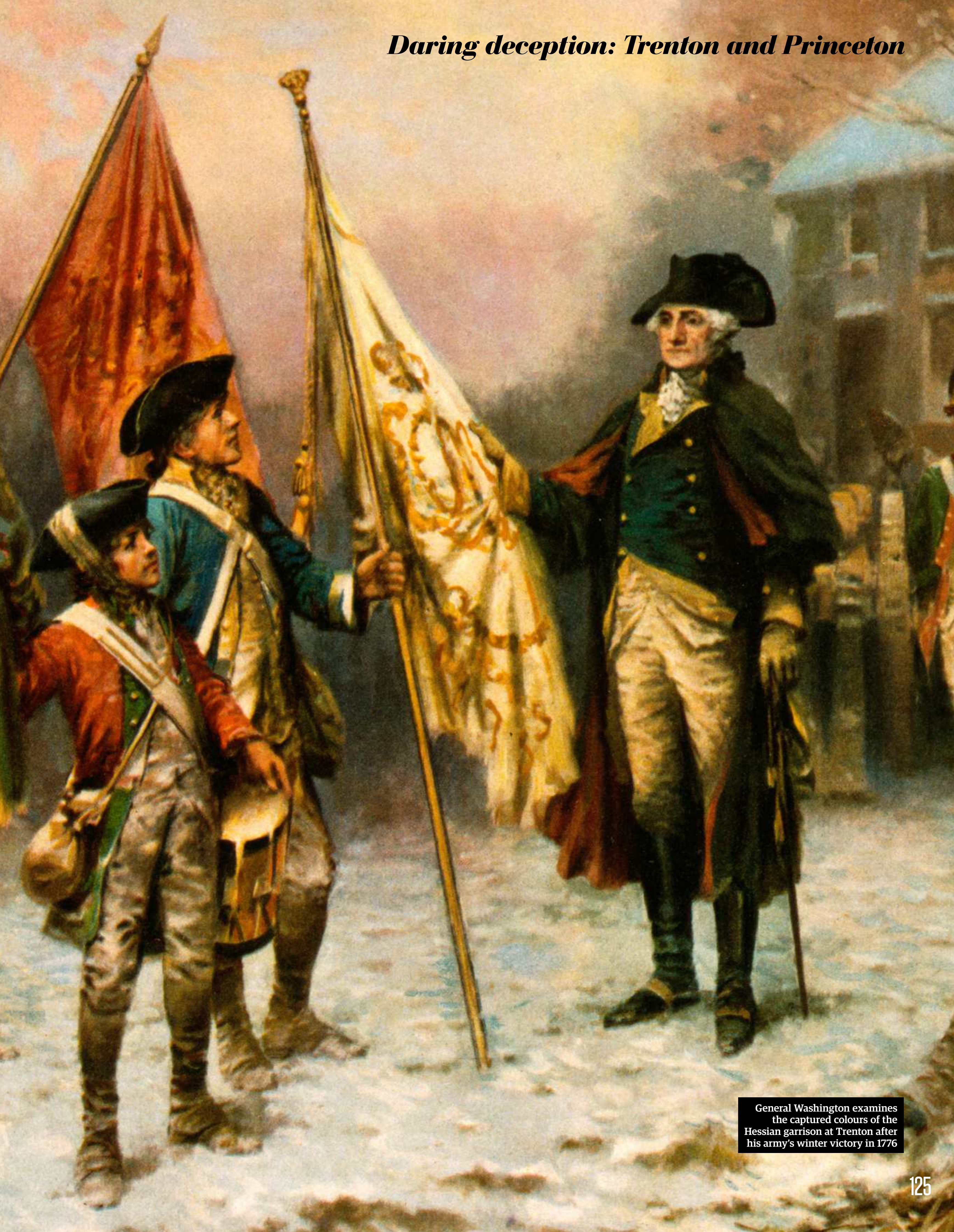
Howe and his army occupied New York City in September, and a British army of 10,000 men under his deputy, General Charles Cornwallis, dogged Washington's retirement toward Pennsylvania. In late November, as Washington's tattered soldiers trudged out of Newark, New Jersey, Cornwallis sighted the rebel rearguard, but he could not force them to engage him in battle.

Still, the situation was desperate for the Continental Army and for the fate of the young nation clinging to the shreds of its revolutionary fervour. Washington moved southward, hoping to cross the Delaware River at Trenton and place the natural barrier between his exhausted command and its pursuers. In early December he faced other concerns as well. With the onset of winter, his hungry troops shivered in threadbare uniforms; many were shoeless. With expiring enlistments, approximately 2,000 men struck out for home.

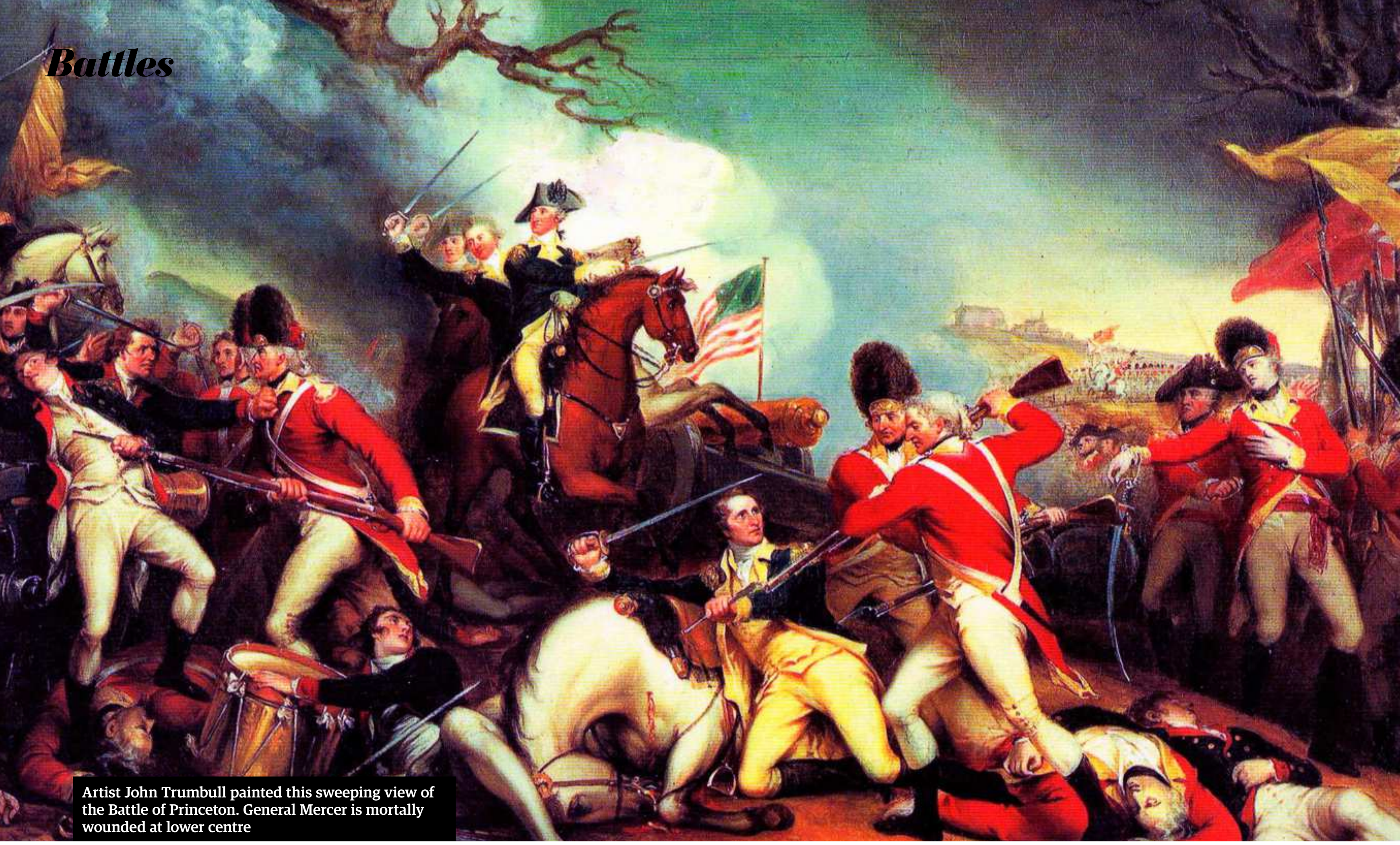
Before the Europeans arrived, Native Americans called the Delaware the Lenape River, meaning the largest river in that region

Desperate decision

With Washington checked and harsh weather expected, Howe, rather than pressing the issue, returned to winter quarters in New York City, his army distributed among strongholds from New York to southern New Jersey and much of its garrison strength in Hessian troops, German mercenaries serving the British, who were content to await the spring campaigning season. Washington, however, harboured doubts that his army could survive a bitter winter. The time had come for a very desperate gamble, a bold stroke. Risky though it was, a winter offensive that provided a very much-needed victory might



General Washington examines the captured colours of the Hessian garrison at Trenton after his army's winter victory in 1776



Artist John Trumbull painted this sweeping view of the Battle of Princeton. General Mercer is mortally wounded at lower centre

> "Sentries brought word to Rall that the Americans were on the march, allowing him time to organise his troops"

actually bring a reversal of fortune and new life to the Patriot cause.

Washington devised a rather complicated plan to surprise the Hessians at Trenton. He dangerously divided his army into three components, one of 700 troops under Brigadier General James Ewing to cross the Delaware at Trenton Ferry and hold the bridge over Assunpink Creek to prevent the Hessians from slipping away; a second of 1,900 men under Lieutenant Colonel John Cadwalader to cross downstream and attack the Hessians at Bordentown to create a diversion; and the main body of 2,400 soldiers to cross the Delaware at McKonkey's Ferry nine miles upstream – Washington in personal command – and attack the Hessians in the early morning.

On the night of 25 December, 1776, the movements commenced, but the commanding general was ill served by his lieutenants. Cadwalader got most of his command across the Delaware but hesitated when the rain-swollen stream appeared too rough for the accompanying artillery. Without the big guns, he decided to withdraw from the New Jersey side of the river and sat down to craft a letter explaining his failure. Ewing was even less demonstrative, observing the fast-flowing Delaware and staying put on the Pennsylvanian side.

For Washington, though, the die was cast: he led his force across the Delaware. Colonel Henry Knox, his artillery commander, made sure his guns were secured for the treacherous waterborne trip, which they successfully completed. The logistical feat was time-consuming, delaying the operation significantly. After they made landfall the troops formed in two wings, the right, commanded by General John Sullivan, following the River Road, and the left, under General Nathaniel Greene, advancing on the Pennington Road.

Melee in the morning

Contrary to many tales of the ensuing battle, the Hessian garrison at Trenton was not caught sleeping off their holiday cheer. Colonel Johann Gottlieb Rall and the 1,400 men under his command were veterans. Sentries had been posted, and they brought word to Rall that the Americans were on the march, allowing him time to organise his troops. However, the Americans moved quickly. Brigadier General Hugh Mercer led his brigade across the Hessian left flank and poured fire into the enemy, while Knox placed artillery in commanding positions to sweep King and Queen streets, the main avenues into Trenton.

The Hessians were pushed back to an orchard south of the town. Rall fell, fatally wounded, and his soldiers surrendered. About 500 Hessians slipped away, but nearly 900 were captured, 22 killed and 83 wounded. The Americans lost four dead and eight wounded.

Cornwallis in pursuit

Washington had won a timely victory, but since Cadwalader and Ewing were absent, he decided to cross the Delaware back into Pennsylvania to take stock of the situation. Meanwhile, the remaining Hessian forces south of Trenton were pulled out of the immediate area. On the morning of 27 December, Cadwalader managed finally to cross the river and found no opposition in New Jersey. When word reached Washington that the Hessians had retired he crossed the Delaware again, this time targeting the enemy outpost at Princeton.

The defeat at Trenton had prompted Howe to action; Cornwallis had planned a winter leave in England but it was promptly cancelled. Howe then ordered him to lead an army of 8,000 troops from New York toward Trenton to confront Washington. Marching through heavy rains, Cornwallis posted 1,200 men under Lieutenant Colonel Charles Mawhood and another 1,200 under General Alexander Leslie at Princeton and Maidenhood respectively, while he pressed on toward Trenton with 5,500 soldiers.

Washington sent some troops ahead to secure the Post Road, his primary route toward Princeton, and ordered the digging of earthworks along a series of hills on the south bank of Assunpink Creek. American skirmishers under Lieutenant Colonel Edward Hand harassed Cornwallis' advance with a delaying action along Five Mile Run and then fell back to Shabakunk Creek, Stockton Hollow, and the north bank of Assunpink Creek, where a Hessian bayonet charge nearly broke the American line. Washington personally rode to the scene and ordered his troops to retire under cover of Knox's artillery.

The British mounted three more charges, but their attack was broken up by artillery and concentrated musket fire. Cannon fire raked the panicked Redcoats as they tried to cross a small bridge over the creek, and an American soldier remembered, "The bridge looked red as blood, with their killed and wounded and their red coats."

Cornwallis reached Trenton late in the day on 2 January, 1777, and called his officers together. Quartermaster General William Erskine advised an immediate strike, saying, "If Washington is the general I take him to be, his army will not be found there in the morning." But Cornwallis decided to wait until the following day to assault the prepared positions, believing his enemy had no choice but to stand and fight. "We've got the old fox safe now," he said, "We'll go over and bag him in the morning."

With his men exhausted and hungry and his plans behind schedule, Washington did consider cancelling the crossing

Foray to Princeton

Although he could not retire into Pennsylvania because his boats were some distance up the Delaware, Washington did have a stealthy option. During the night, American artillery fired a few shots into the British camp, while 400 soldiers continued to dig, tend campfires and demonstrate as though their numbers were much larger. Washington took the rest of his force on a night march, first east and then north along the Quaker Road. Cornwallis awoke to find his quarry gone.

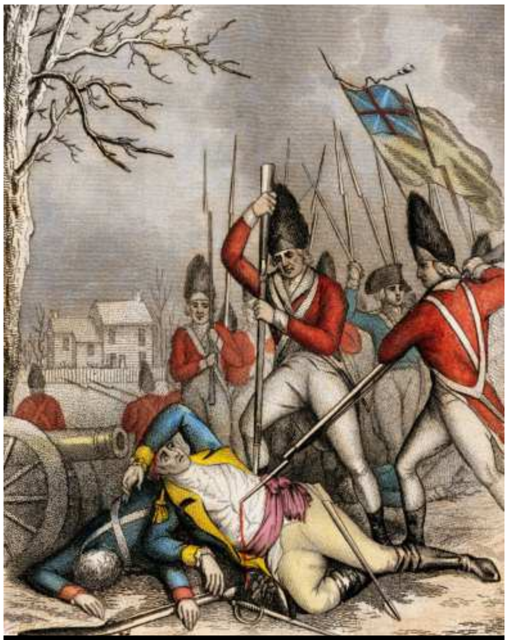
Washington's march began at 2 am, and as the Sun rose the Americans were only a couple of miles outside Princeton, crossing Stony Creek. With Mercer's brigade detached to cover the Post Road to Trenton against a British retreat and to provide early warning of any approaching British force, Washington prepared to assault the town, but Mercer ran into trouble. Mawhood had already moved out of Princeton to join Cornwallis at Trenton, and when Mercer's Brigade came into view he attacked the Americans.

A British bayonet charge broke the Patriot's line. Mercer was killed and his men fled in panic. Cadwalader came up but was unable to stem the tide. Washington heard the gunfire and rode to the scene, taking personal command and shouting, "Parade with us my brave fellows! There is but a handful of the enemy, and we will have them directly!"

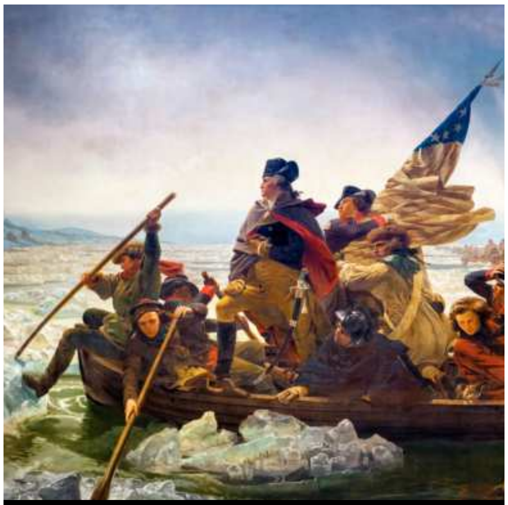
Colonel David Hitchcock's brigade of continental soldiers levelled its muskets and fired steady volleys, while the rest of Washington's army closed in on the British flanks, turning the tables. Mawhood realised he was nearly surrounded and ordered another bayonet charge. His men complied and opened an escape route toward Trenton, the Americans in hot pursuit and rounding up 50 British prisoners before they were halted.

Washington turned towards the single regiment Mawhood had left at Princeton. About 200 Hessians barricaded themselves into a building, but Captain Alexander Hamilton brought a cannon forward and fired two rounds into the structure, convincing its occupants to surrender immediately. The Americans had won their second stunning victory within a week. British losses stood at 28 killed, 58 wounded and 323 captured. Washington's army lost just 23 dead and 20 wounded.

The triumphs at Trenton and Princeton were the tonic that sustained the Revolutionary army throughout the winter. Rather than press his luck further, Washington marched his weary men to winter quarters at Morristown, New Jersey, for a well-earned rest. An embarrassed Cornwallis wisely chose not to pursue his quarry. The momentum was now with the Americans.



Promising young General Hugh Mercer was killed in action at the Battle of Princeton as his brigade faced British troops



This iconic image of General George Washington crossing the Delaware River on the eve of the Battle of Trenton includes historical inaccuracies

John Honeyman lived in this house and owned a large farm in Griggstown, New Jersey, after the Revolutionary War

A spy for Washington?

The tale of John Honeyman, an Irish-born veteran of the British Army who supposedly served as a spy for George Washington, is an enduring legend of the Battle of Trenton. As a conscript aboard a ship bound for America, Honeyman had prevented James Wolfe – a future hero of the Battle of Québec that was fought during the French and Indian War – from falling overboard. Wolfe promised to remember the gesture and wrote to Honeyman when he was promoted to general. Honeyman became a member of Wolfe's bodyguard and was with him at Québec, where Wolfe died a hero in 1759. Subsequently, Honeyman resided in New Jersey and retained the letter from Wolfe.

Sympathising with the Patriot cause, Honeyman later approached General George Washington, offering his services. Supposedly, he was employed as a spy, masquerading as a loyalist and working as a weaver and butcher in Trenton. His Irish brogue and the letter from Wolfe were enough to convince doubters of his pro-British sentiment. When Honeyman had gathered important information he would wander too close to the American side, getting himself captured and brought before Washington to deliver it. Washington would then devise a way to set him free.

Honeyman supposedly provided vital intelligence, encouraging Washington to execute his attack on Trenton. No record of an exchange between the two men exists, but Honeyman did purchase a large farm after the war, quite a feat on the meagre income of a butcher and weaver. Perhaps funds had come from the US Government as compensation for his wartime service.

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The turning point

The Battle of Saratoga was a clear-cut American victory that paved the way for European aid to reach the rebellious colonials and ultimate victory in the War of Independence

The gallant and dashing British Lieutenant General John Burgoyne, known as 'Gentleman Johnny' to his appreciative soldiers on account of his relatively enlightened ideas concerning discipline, had a plan. Burgoyne presented his idea to Lord George Germain, secretary of state for the American colonies in the cabinet of King George III's prime minister, Lord Frederick North.

Now 1777, the American rebellion had been underway since April 1775 and showed no signs of coming to a close. Burgoyne, back in London after an earlier stint in North America, delivered a paper he had written to Germain entitled *Thoughts for Conducting the War from the Side of Canada*. In it, Burgoyne outlined his wish to lead an expeditionary army south from Canada down into the American colonies. King George liked the plan and gave it his approval. Burgoyne would take a large body of troops, around 10,000 in all, including British regulars, German mercenaries, Loyalist volunteers and Native American allies, and with these men capture Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain in northern New York, and then do the same to Albany on the Hudson River.

Albany was the primary supply centre of the American Northern Army, and its capture would be a devastating blow to the rebels. Success in the operation would also separate the colonies of New England from those of the Middle Atlantic and the South. Once the three forces had converged, they would turn east against New England, the heartland of the rebellion, and crush it.

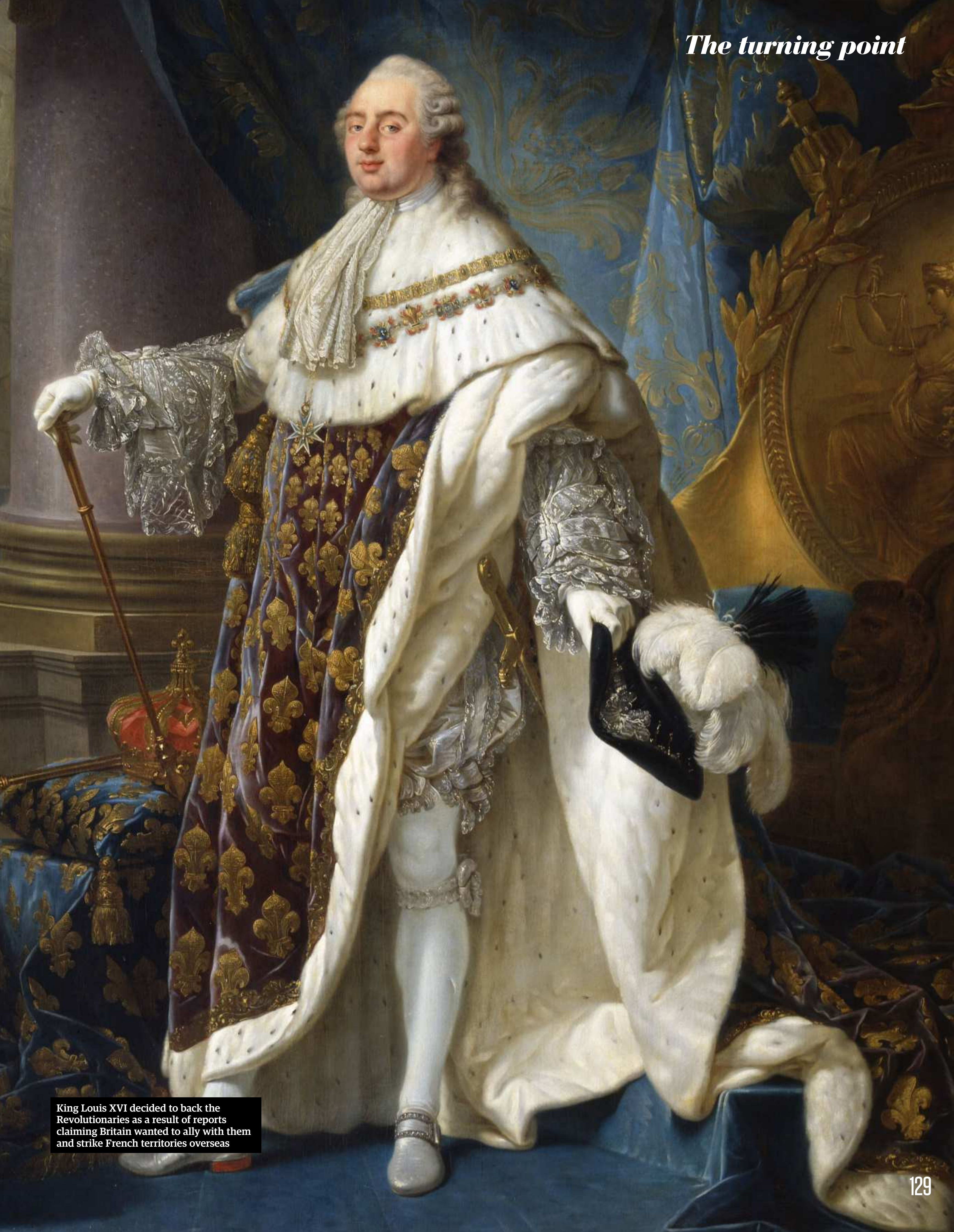
Burgoyne was to be joined in this operation by two other British commanders already in the American theatre. Brigadier General Barry St. Leger, with 2,100 under his command, moving southwest along the St. Lawrence River, was to take Fort Stanwix, continue down the Mohawk River valley and then link up with Burgoyne at Albany. A third force of around 3,000 under Lieutenant General Sir Henry Clinton was to move northward along the Hudson River at the same time.

Oddly, General William Howe, British Commander-in-Chief in America, was never sent explicit orders to take part in the operation or to send soldiers to support Burgoyne. He would instead engage George Washington's rebel army at Brandywine in Pennsylvania, winning the battle but not being available to help Burgoyne.

The march South begins

Burgoyne was nothing if not self-confident to the point of cockiness, and before departing for America he had bet leading Whig politician Charles Fox ten pounds that he would win a victory over the rebels inside a year's time. Setting out from St. Johns, Canada, on 13 June, he crossed over to Lake Champlain between 27 June and 1 July. The American defenders of Fort Ticonderoga promptly abandoned their positions on the night of 5 July. The four gunners manning the battery of guns that the Americans had left behind to cover their retreat proved useless. The men had found a cask of Madeira wine, gotten drunk and were discovered sound asleep the next morning by Native Americans in service to the British.

St. Leger's force departed Montreal on 23 June and pushed down the St. Lawrence. By early August St. Leger was besieging Fort Stanwix. There was a clash with a relieving American force at Oriskany on 6 August that ended inconclusively. Another relieving force under Major General Benedict Arnold was dispatched to go to the aid of



King Louis XVI decided to back the Revolutionaries as a result of reports claiming Britain wanted to ally with them and strike French territories overseas the Fort Stanwix garrison. However, troubles with his Native American allies forced St. Leger to give up the siege of the fort on 23 August, leaving his artillery behind.

Meanwhile, Burgoyne's men were struggling through the virtually trackless forests of northern New York, harassed by local American forces under the command of Major General Philip Schuyler. To delay Burgoyne further, Schuyler had his men chop down trees to block the miserable roads. Cattle were driven off and food was hidden. At one point, Burgoyne's army was averaging barely more than one mile per day. All this gained the Americans time, allowing Schuyler to steadily build up his own army.

Burgoyne's baggage train was shown to be entirely deficient for his army's needs in the wilderness, and his cannons lacked enough horses to pull them forward. A foraging expedition of mainly German mercenary troops that he dispatched into New Hampshire under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Friedrich von Baum came to grief at Bennington on 16 August. Baum's Native American allies so frightened local Loyalists that they remained home to defend their families instead of coming out to join the royal cause. Baum was later killed in combat with New Hampshire militia and his battered men surrendered.

A relief force sent out by Burgoyne was slowed by the awful roads and bad weather. It was then set upon by New Hampshire militiamen. The Germans were routed, with over 200 of their men killed or wounded and about 700 captured. Burgoyne's command had been severely depleted, and though he did gain a few reinforcements coming down from Canada, he was still far short of his goal of Albany. Making matters worse, his failure to secure food in the raid on Bennington meant he had to halt for days to let his transports bearing provisions to catch up to him. Also, his Native American allies, learning of the Bennington defeat, deserted him for the most part, further depleting his force. Next, news arrived that St. Leger had abandoned Fort Stanwix and that he and his men would not be joining with Burgoyne.

Despite his good showing, Schuyler was replaced in command of the Northern Army by Major General Horatio Gates on 3 August. Gates took over Schuyler's troops, who now numbered around 6,000, a mix of regulars and militia. Gates chose to move his army to Bemis Heights overlooking the Hudson River, where the rough terrain and high ground would give him the advantage. Burgoyne would have to move past the Heights if he wanted to make Albany 20 miles further down, as the main road south passed right beneath Gates' position. At the direction of the Polish volunteer Thaddeus Kościuszko, one of many European officers who had crossed the Atlantic to fight for the American cause, the Heights' defences, already formidable on account of their 200-300-foot elevation, deep ravines, thickly wooded terrain and steep slopes, were improved with earthworks, felled trees and emplacements of batteries of guns.

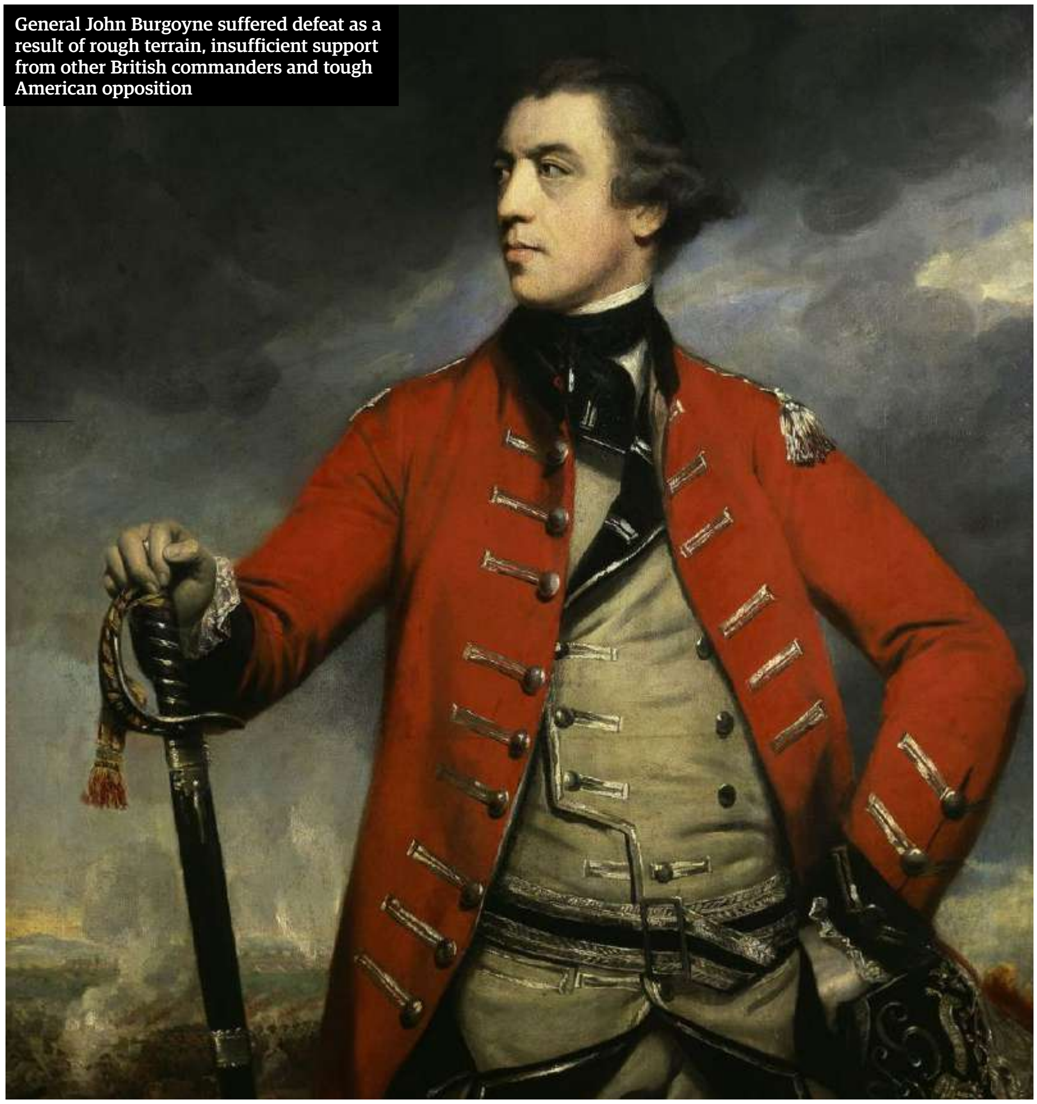
Upon hearing of Burgoyne's surrender Louis XVI decided the time had come to talk to the Americans about an alliance

In the meantime, by 15 September, Burgoyne had continued his southward march and had made the river road. His advance was spearheaded by his engineers, who cleared away obstacles, but progress averaged a mere three miles per day at this point. While this was happening, in early September Gates received welcome reinforcements, about 1,200 men under the command of Benedict Arnold, bringing his total force up to about 7,000.

Battle of Freeman's farm: 19 September, 1777

Deprived of his Native American scouts, Burgoyne blundered about, learning that Gates was close by only when some of his men - out digging for potatoes in the fields to fill their empty bellies - were surprised by American troops. Now aware of Gates' presence atop Bemis Heights, on 19 September Burgoyne launched a three-pronged attack against the Americans. In the first of two engagements that together have become known as the Battle of Saratoga, the British vanguard ran into a corps of American riflemen amid the dense woods that surrounded Freeman's Farm. Many British officers were shot by American marksmen. Other forces were soon drawn into the fight. The Americans gave better than they got but were forced to retreat, which they did in good order.

Unlike Burgoyne, Gates was still gaining reinforcements as time passed. He was, however, having trouble with one of his subordinates: Benedict Arnold. Some of Arnold's troops had been involved in the Freeman's Farm battle, but Gates' had neglected to laud anyone among them for their performance in his report to Congress concerning the encounter. Arnold lodged a protest at this oversight, and tensions rose to such a high level that Gates eventually ordered Arnold to leave the American camp.



General John Burgoyne suffered defeat as a result of rough terrain, insufficient support from other British commanders and tough American opposition

Arnold's heroics at Saratoga are commemorated only by a monument of a boot, indicating that he was wounded in the leg during the battle

Further south, General Sir Henry Clinton was in the Hudson River highlands. He had no specific orders to help Burgoyne, and the last message he had received from his fellow general on 6 August had informed him that Burgoyne expected to be in Albany by 23 August, which by late September he had still not reached. Clinton sent Burgoyne a message of his own, telling him that he would be making an attack on Fort Montgomery. Clinton took this fort on 6 October, and though another message had arrived from Burgoyne informing him of his plight and asking him to meet him at Albany, he decided to return to New York City, where he was needed to assume command since the two British generals left in charge had become sick.

Battle of Bemis Heights: 7 October, 1777

No help would be coming to Burgoyne from any quarter. He was heavily outnumbered, with Gates' army having increased in size to about 11,000, most of whom were continental regular soldiers. Elsewhere, American militia had severed communications with Fort Ticonderoga to the north and were quashing British attempts to collect food for their hungry army. His senior officers advised a retreat, but Burgoyne would hear none of it. Instead, he chose to go on the attack against the American position on Bemis Heights. At 10:00 am on 7 October his army moved out of its positions around Freeman's Farm, held up by American pickets. Simply getting through the woods with their heavy guns was problematic for the British. The attack was slowed also because it was as much a foraging expedition as an assault, with the British troops collecting food for their famished horses. The British advance stopped for a while as this process took place.

Gates ordered simultaneous attacks on both flanks of the immobile British line. The attacks were successful and both British wings crumbled, accompanied in their retreat by the artillerymen. The German mercenaries under Major General Friedrich Adolph Riedesel remained in place but were set upon by none other than Benedict Arnold, coming on like an avenging angel to mete out divinely ordained punishment. He had not left the American camp as Gates had ordered and had now come out to fight. He fought like a man possessed, riding a large brown horse and waving his sword to urge his men into the attack. The Germans were eventually pushed from the field.

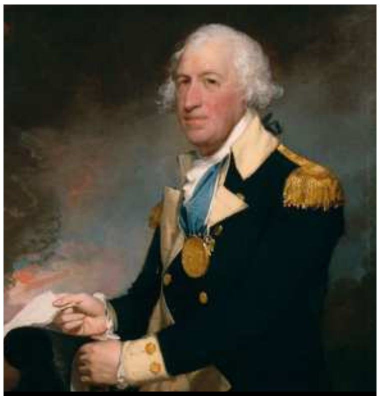
With the British line disintegrating, Arnold sensed that he could strike a fatal blow against the whole of the British army. He next led an attack on the British field fortifications (in place since the battle at Freeman's Farm) and achieved great success until he received a musket ball in the leg. The chance to crush Burgoyne's army was lost. Arnold was removed from the field, and the attack, with no one of similar energy or courage to lead it, petered out. Losses for the British on the day were reported as 600, with around 150 Americans lost. Burgoyne then withdrew his men behind their field fortifications.

The end at Saratoga

The next day, Burgoyne began to pull out of his positions. Driving rain hindered his movement, and it was not until the early hours of 9 October that the whole of the British army managed to get out. Burgoyne made a new camp at Saratoga, where he remained for the better part of a week. The Americans began to encroach upon him, digging entrenchments of their own, and Burgoyne was soon surrounded. Gates' numbers were still increasing, growing as high as 18,000, and the area was so filled with Americans that Burgoyne had little hope of escape no matter what he did.

With food running out and his men going hungry, Burgoyne asked Gates for terms. These were relatively lenient. His men, numbering over 5,700, were to be paroled, meaning that they would be allowed to depart after pledging that they would never fight again in North America. They were then to go to Boston, where they would board a ship for England. The surrender was made official on 17 October, 1777, with Burgoyne meeting Gates in person and giving over his sword, which Gates then handed back to him.

The Americans took huge stocks of arms from the British, but the political rewards of the Battle of Saratoga were worth far more. News of the American victory arrived in Paris on 5 December, and King Louis XVI granted diplomatic recognition to the United States the day afterward. A treaty of alliance followed early the following year on 6 February, 1778. The rebellious colonies had obtained the aid of a powerful European ally, which provided money and arms. French help, supplemented by that of Spain and the Netherlands, would prove crucial in securing victory for the United States.



Arnold was a hero of the Battle of Saratoga but his later treason damned him in the eyes of his countrymen

Benedict Arnold: hero and traitor

General Benedict Arnold (1741–1801) was a merchant before the start of the Revolutionary War. He became a captain of a militia in Connecticut and with Ethan Allen took part in the assault that captured Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain in May 1775. Later that year, General George Washington gave him the command of the expeditionary force tasked with the capture of Québec. After an arduous trek with 700 men through the Maine wilderness, at the end of December 1775 the American army failed in its task and Arnold himself was badly wounded.

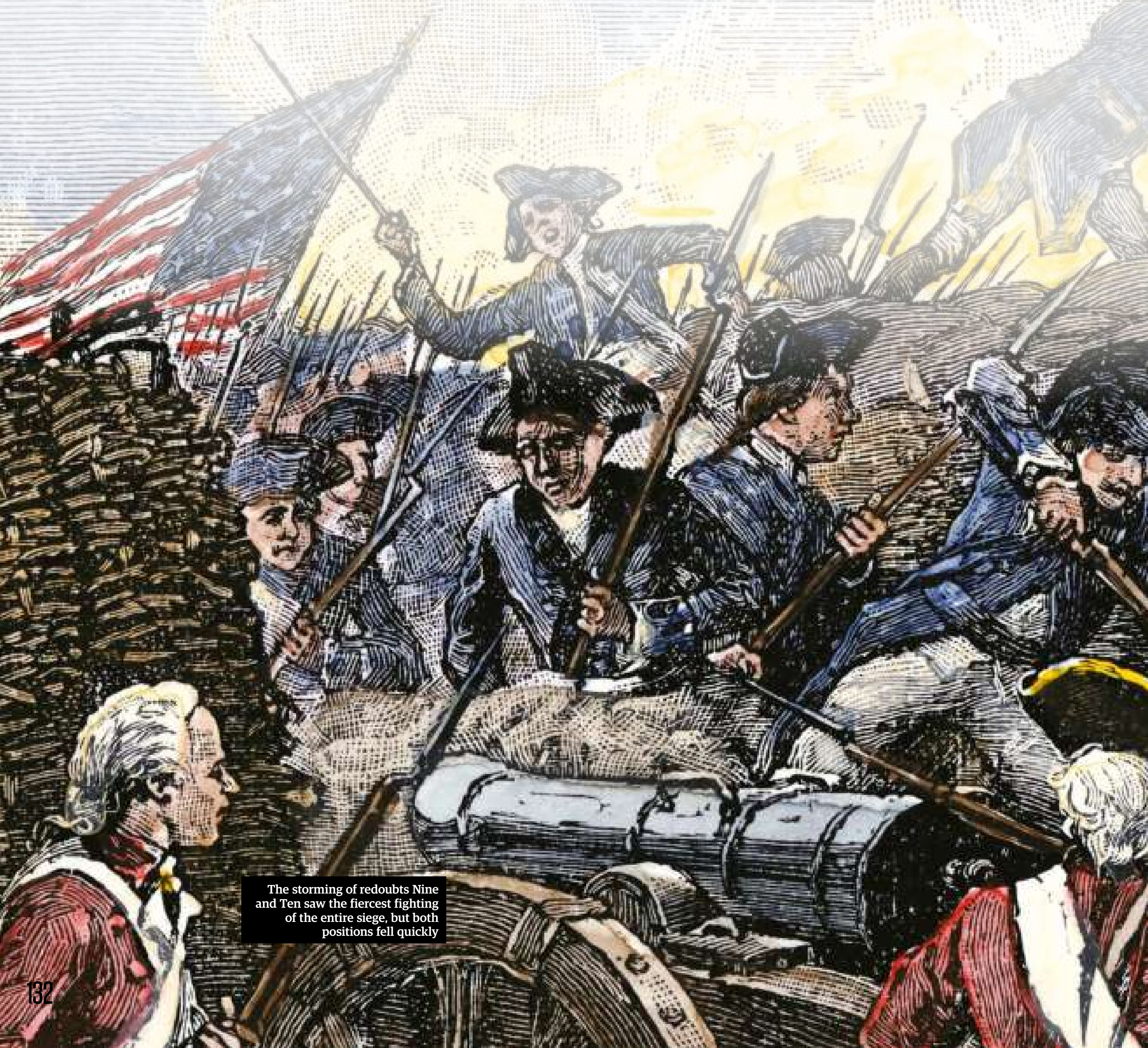
Arnold was later made a brigadier general and constructed ships on Lake Champlain. At the Battle of Valcour Island on 11 October, 1776, he inflicted heavy losses on a British flotilla despite losing the engagement. Though it had been a loss, Arnold managed to prevent the British from gaining control of the northern Hudson River. Afterward, he was lauded for his heroism. His performance at the Battle of Saratoga the next year, in which he was wounded, was undeniably impressive, yet he grew discontented with his lot. He was aggrieved that he was passed over for promotion to major general, though the promotion did come later. He was also outraged that his handling of funds was impugned, leading to him becoming increasingly embittered.

In command of Philadelphia in 1778, he became acquainted with local Loyalist families and married Peggy Shippen, the daughter of a wealthy Loyalist. Arnold had begun to turn from the Patriot cause he had originally espoused and made contact with British agents. His plan to hand over the American stronghold at West Point failed. Arnold escaped capture but his British accomplice, Major John André, was captured by Washington's men and hanged. Now a traitor, Arnold fought his erstwhile comrades on behalf of the British, though he was never trusted. Ever since to be called a 'Benedict Arnold' in America is to be labelled a traitor.

Siege of Yorktown

The world turned upside down when a British army found itself cornered by a combined French-American force

Words David Smith



The storming of redoubts Nine and Ten saw the fiercest fighting of the entire siege, but both positions fell quickly

Yorktown, the decisive victory of the American War of Independence, has been viewed as a stunning upset. The defeat of the mighty British Army at the hands of the inexperienced Americans is either a miraculous triumph or an abject humiliation, depending on your viewpoint. Yet this was a battle that emphasised the monumental task that was facing Britain in attempting to subdue a rebellion in colonies nearly 5,000 kilometres (3,000 miles) from her own shores, while simultaneously fending off the French, Spanish and even Dutch forces.

It was an outnumbered British army that found itself penned in at Yorktown and, more importantly, it was an outmanoeuvred one. It was also, at the critical moment, deprived of support from the Royal Navy, which had previously ruled the waves along the American seaboard, offering both supply and a safe retreat for any British force near the coast.

The Southern strategy

French intervention in the war, following the defeat of another British army at Saratoga in 1777, was expected to dramatically tip the scales in America's favour. The French could provide experienced soldiers, but naval support was far more important - in the first two campaigns of the war, British generals had been able to take for granted total superiority at sea.

But the French had proved unable or unwilling to make a decisive impact in the colonies, preferring instead to concentrate efforts in the West Indies, where lucrative territories seemed ripe for picking off while Britain was distracted with the American war.

The British had therefore been able to regroup after the shock of Saratoga and refocus efforts in

> "The British forces under Cornwallis were some of the most experienced in the colonies. Hardened by campaigning, they made up a small but tough army"

the southern colonies, capturing Charleston in May 1780 and then annihilating the last rebel army in the south at Camden the following August. When General Charles, Earl Cornwallis took his army into North Carolina and then Virginia in 1781, it looked like his aggressive leadership might finally subdue the south.

British intentions were to destroy any organised resistance in the southern colonies and then leave local peace-keeping in the hands of loyalist forces, while Cornwallis's army moved on to pacify the next area. It was a promising strategy, but Cornwallis's army was small - only around 3,000 men - and his insistence on rapid movement meant loyalists were not given enough time to firmly establish themselves before the comforting presence of the redcoats was removed.

Moreover, American commanders were learning how to handle the British. At the Battle of Guilford Courthouse on 15 March 1781, the Americans offered a defence in depth and Cornwallis was forced to expend a quarter of his men for victory. Strategically, it was a disaster. The American commander, Nathanael Greene, then started to move his men back towards South Carolina, but Cornwallis had no appetite to follow and instead marched to link up with a small force, under the command of the American turncoat Benedict Arnold, on the Chesapeake.

Greene would go on to prise one British garrison after another out of their strongholds in South Carolina, undoing all of the good work of the preceding year. Cornwallis, meanwhile, was firmly on course for his date with destiny at Yorktown.

The road to Yorktown

The British forces under Cornwallis were some of the most experienced in the colonies. Hardened by campaigning, they made up a small but tough army. The problem was that combat and disease (especially since the war had shifted to the south) had whittled away their numbers. After linking up with Arnold's force, Cornwallis still had just over 8,000 men under his command.

With garrison troops dotted across the British-held territory, Cornwallis's army was the last mobile force Britain could deploy, and he still had ambitions of continuing his costly offensive: he saw the south as the only sensible region to pursue an active war. "If we mean an offensive war in America, we must abandon New York and bring our whole force into Virginia," Cornwallis wrote in a letter. "If our plan is defensive... let us quit the Carolinas."

After joining with Arnold in May, orders were received from the British commander-in-chief in New York, Sir Henry Clinton. He favoured an offensive move into Pennsylvania, but was against further operations in Virginia. If Cornwallis did not want to move into Pennsylvania, he was to hunker down in a favourable defensive spot. The favourable spots mentioned were Williamsburg and Yorktown.

The British command structure was fractured at this point. Clinton felt unable to control Cornwallis and was unsure in his own mind what to do. He saw the value of a sizeable army in the south, but he was also worried that a combined French-American force might be moving on New York. In reality, Britain was simply running out of men to both hold existing territory and threaten new areas. By August, Cornwallis, in a rather deflated state of mind, was constructing defences at Yorktown (he also occupied and fortified the small village of Gloucester, across the York River). It was against his natural aggressive instincts, and his mood was not improved when a sizeable French fleet appeared off the coast at the end of the month.

The noose tightens

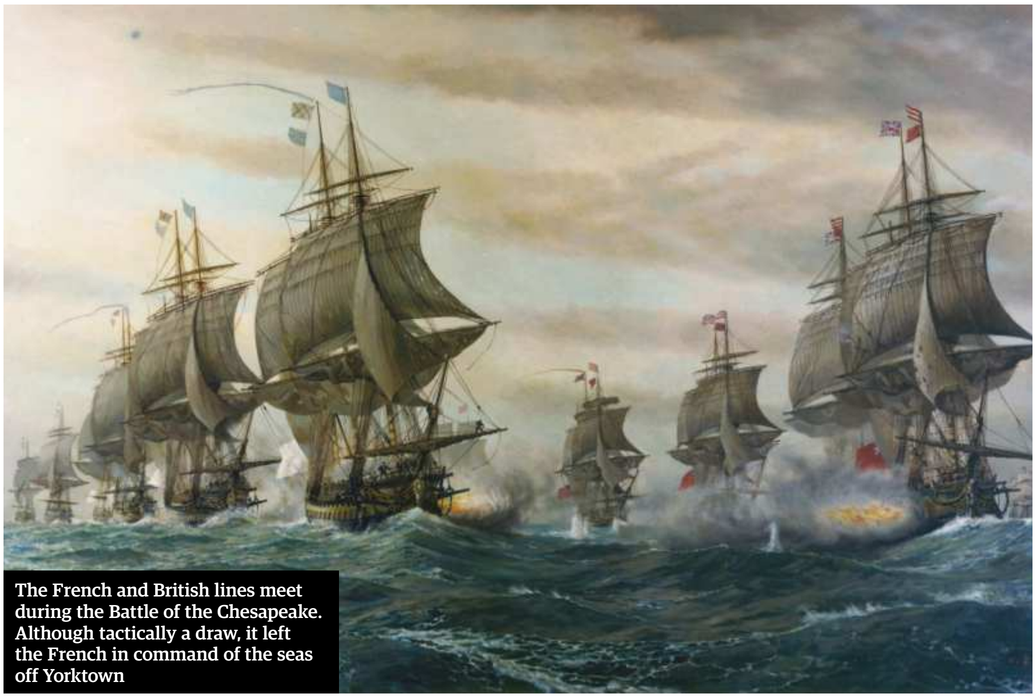
The French and Americans were already scenting an opportunity, but in order to trap Cornwallis they would need to pull off something remarkable. The American commander-in-chief, George Washington, was in the north along with a French force under the comte de Rochambeau. A small French fleet was based at Rhode Island, while the largest French fleet was in the West Indies. Pulling these disparate forces together would be, in the words of historian William B. Willcox, "as complicated and brilliant a combined operation as the eighteenth century witnessed."

The crucial element would be naval forces, but it was far from certain that the French would deliver in this department. The French fleet Cornwallis spotted off the coast on 31 August was commanded by the comte de Grasse. It was a powerful force of 27 warships - far more than anticipated by the British naval commander in the West Indies, Admiral George Brydges Rodney. De Grasse had confounded expectations to send such a large fleet north. Originally ordered only to cooperate with the Spanish in the West Indies, he discovered that they had no plans for operations and so offered his services to Rochambeau and Washington. Even then, it was expected that he would send only half of his fleet northwards, reserving the rest to escort French trade ships back to Europe.

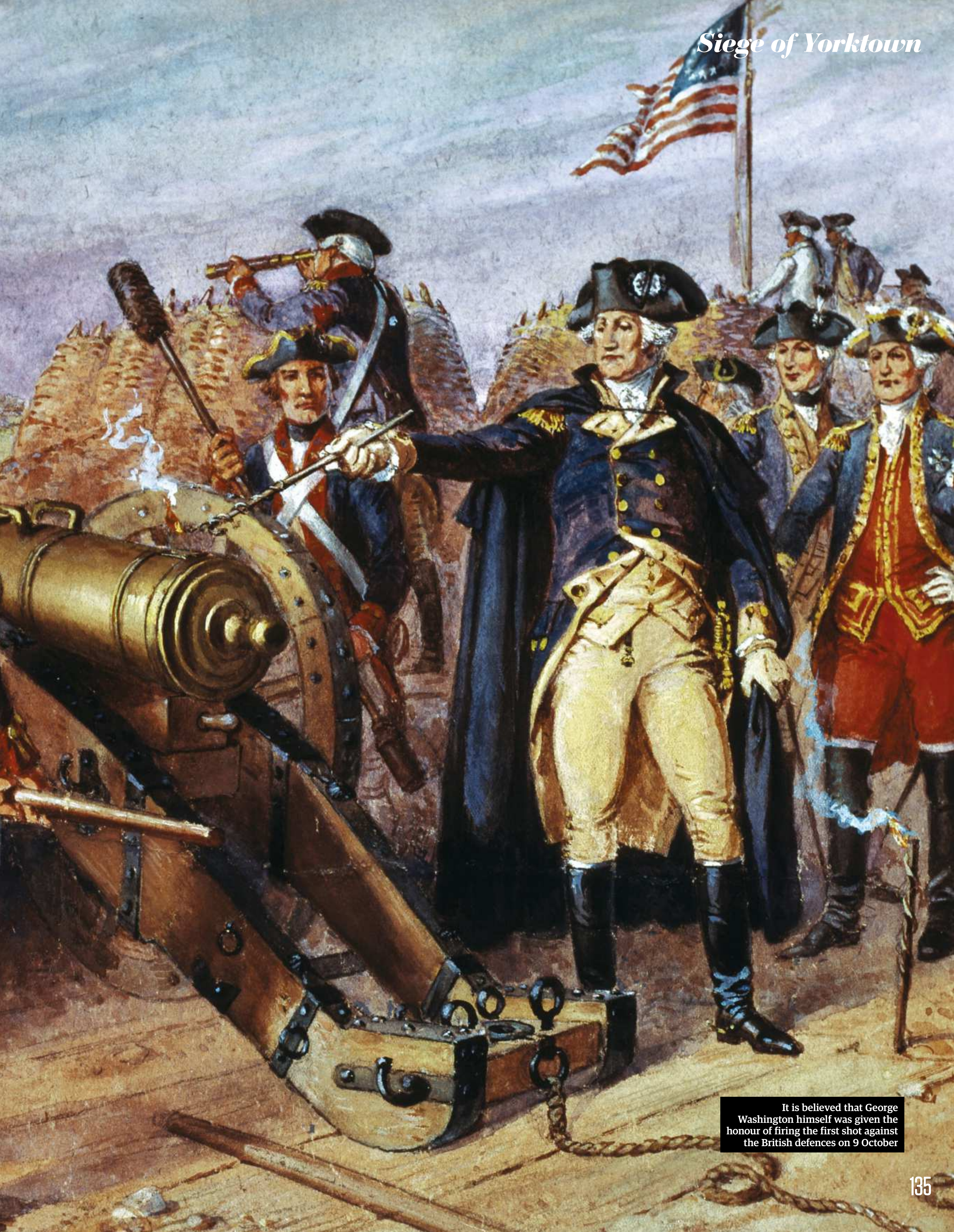
Instead, de Grasse took the bold step of suspending the trade fleet and moving north with 27 ships of the line. Rodney expected him to send 14 and so detached just 14 of his own ships of the line to chase the French vessels.

De Grasse's fleet also carried two valuable commodities - 3,000 French troops borrowed from Santo Domingo and a chest of Spanish gold, which would pay American troops and keep them in the field. The first piece of the French-American puzzle was falling into place. They would have naval superiority at Yorktown.

On 19 August French and American troops on the Hudson began to move southwards. Clinton



The French and British lines meet during the Battle of the Chesapeake. Although tactically a draw, it left the French in command of the seas off Yorktown



It is believed that George Washington himself was given the honour of firing the first shot against the British defences on 9 October was convinced they could not be heading for the Chesapeake, believing the climate to be too oppressive for offensive operations at that time of year. Instead, he feared a move on Staten Island and conferred with the commander of the British fleet at New York, Admiral Thomas Graves.

Even when intelligence arrived that de Grasse was heading northwards with a large fleet, it was believed he was aiming for New York. It was part of an extensive series of missed opportunities for the British. The 14-ship squadron sent by Rodney to chase de Grasse actually overhauled the larger French fleet (the British ships had copper bottoms, which helped them cut through the water more easily), arriving at Yorktown a full five days before the French ships. The commander, Admiral Samuel Hood, believed the French must have already passed through on their way to New York, so he moved off again rather than staying.

Whether he could have fended off 27 French ships is a big question, but there may have been a chance of staging some sort of effective defence. Hood may also have had a chance of evacuating Cornwallis's army, but the army was not considered to be under threat. If Graves had thought to move his force of six ships to the south, he could have linked up with Hood and faced de Grasse's ships with genuine hopes of success.

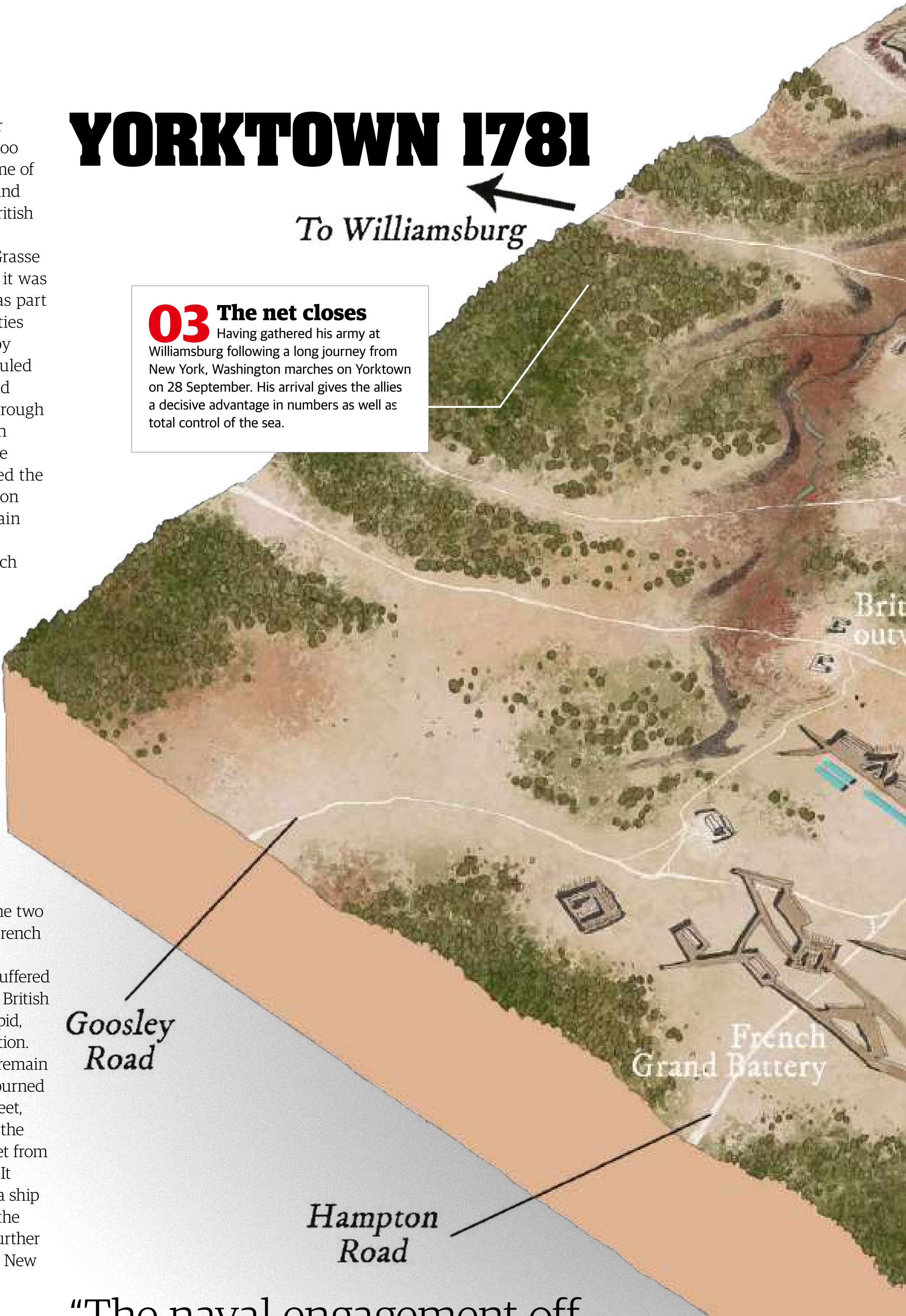
Neither option was taken, leaving de Grasse in command of the coast when he arrived at the end of August, but all was not yet lost for the British. Hood continued to New York, joined forces with Graves and headed back to the south. On 5 September the two fleets met, with 19 British vessels facing 24 French ships, which headed out for the engagement.

In an inconclusive encounter, both fleets suffered serious damage to five of their ships, but the British came off worst, with HMS Shrewsbury, Intrepid, Ajax, Alcide and Terrible nearly put out of action. HMS Terrible, which had been struggling to remain seaworthy even before the battle, had to be burned a few days later. Even worse for the British fleet, de Grasse led them away from the mouth of the Chesapeake, allowing the smaller French fleet from Rhode Island to safely make it into the river. It was 12 September before Graves could send a ship to look into the Chesapeake to take stock of the situation. The increased French fleet made further action impossible and Graves limped back to New York to refit.

Cornwallis outnumbered

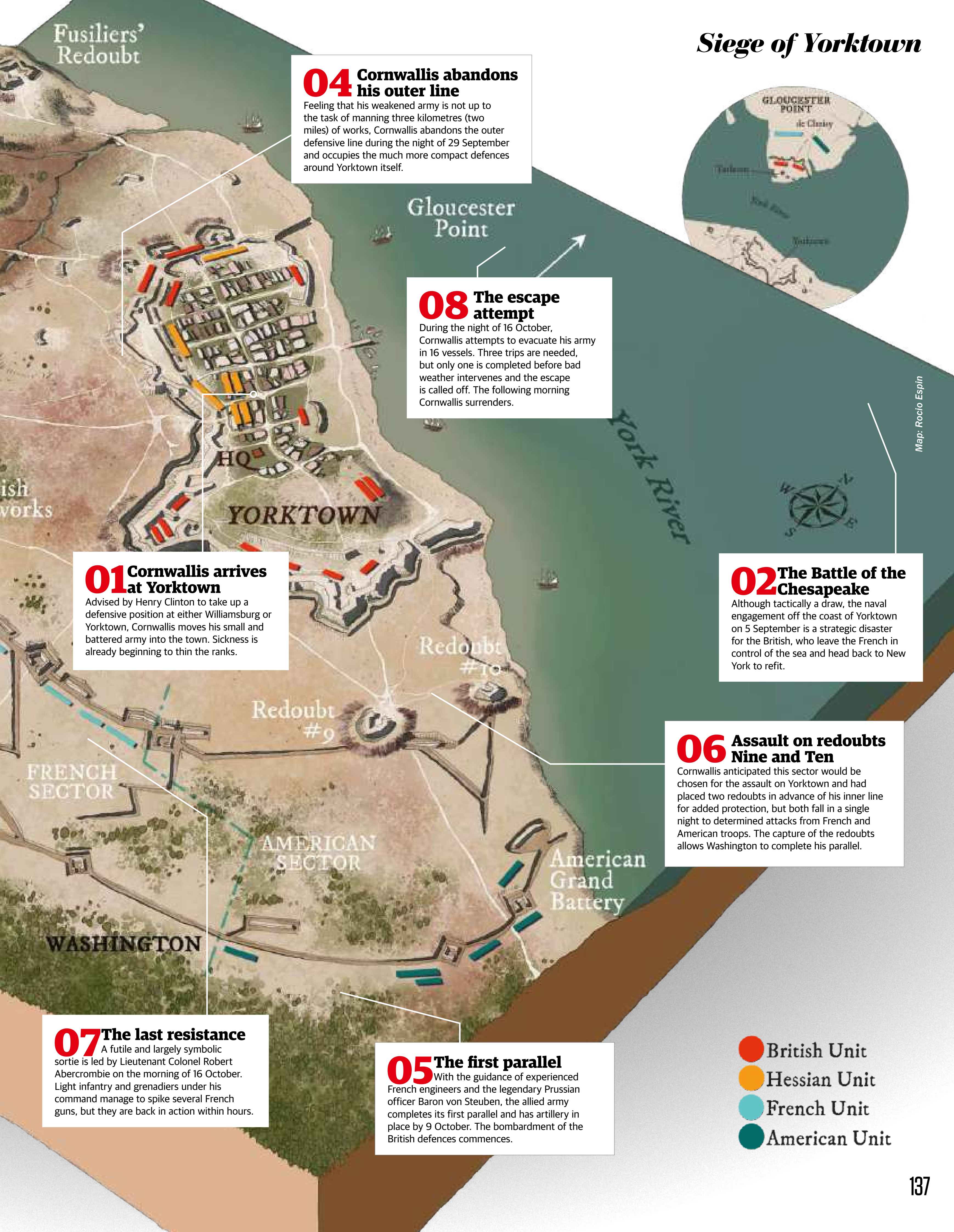
The French fleet from Rhode Island not only tipped the scales decisively at sea, it also brought a siege train of heavy cannon with which to attack Yorktown. Two days after Graves left Cornwallis to his fate, that fate began to take shape in the form of the combined American and French army under Washington and Rochambeau. The first units reached Williamsburg, near Yorktown, on 14

YORKTOWN 1781



03 The net closes
Having gathered his army at Williamsburg following a long journey from New York, Washington marches on Yorktown on 28 September. His arrival gives the allies a decisive advantage in numbers as well as total control of the sea.

> "The naval engagement off the coast of Yorktown on is a strategic disaster for the British, who leave the French in control of the sea"



● British Unit
● Hessian Unit
● French Unit
● American Unit

Map: Rocio Espin

01 Cornwallis arrives at Yorktown

Advised by Henry Clinton to take up a defensive position at either Williamsburg or Yorktown, Cornwallis moves his small and battered army into the town. Sickness is already beginning to thin the ranks.

02 The Battle of the Chesapeake

Although tactically a draw, the naval engagement off the coast of Yorktown on 5 September is a strategic disaster for the British, who leave the French in control of the sea and head back to New York to refit.

04 Cornwallis abandons his outer line

Feeling that his weakened army is not up to the task of manning three kilometres (two miles) of works, Cornwallis abandons the outer defensive line during the night of 29 September and occupies the much more compact defences around Yorktown itself.

05 The first parallel

With the guidance of experienced French engineers and the legendary Prussian officer Baron von Steuben, the allied army completes its first parallel and has artillery in place by 9 October. The bombardment of the British defences commences.

06 Assault on redoubts Nine and Ten

Cornwallis anticipated this sector would be chosen for the assault on Yorktown and had placed two redoubts in advance of his inner line for added protection, but both fall in a single night to determined attacks from French and American troops. The capture of the redoubts allows Washington to complete his parallel.

07 The last resistance

A futile and largely symbolic sortie is led by Lieutenant Colonel Robert Abercrombie on the morning of 16 October. Light infantry and grenadiers under his command manage to spike several French guns, but they are back in action within hours.

08 The escape attempt

During the night of 16 October, Cornwallis attempts to evacuate his army in 16 vessels. Three trips are needed, but only one is completed before bad weather intervenes and the escape is called off. The following morning Cornwallis surrenders.

September and Washington continued to gather and organise his force for the next two weeks.

Cornwallis was pondering an attack on the army penning him in at Yorktown. He was on the verge of authorising a desperate breakout attempt when a letter arrived from Clinton on 14 September, full of optimism about a potential relief effort. Admiral Robert Digby was on his way from Britain with ships and reinforcements. Together with the fleet already at New York, it would add up to a force strong enough to evacuate Cornwallis. This hopeful vision swayed Cornwallis, and he called off his planned offensive.

It was to prove a disastrous mistake, and the last window of opportunity had closed. Washington began moving on Yorktown on 28 September, and his men began to draw up opposite the British defensive works the following day. With around 6,000 Continental troops and thousands of Virginia militia, Washington was more than a match for Cornwallis's bedraggled army, which was already suffering badly from camp sicknesses, notably malaria. The 4,000 French troops with Rochambeau joined the 3,000 from de Grasse's fleet, as well as 5,000 sailors released for service on land, to make the allies' numerical advantage decisive.

The problem facing the British was serious. Siege works tended to follow a remorseless pattern, and unless a serious mistake was made by the besieging army, it usually ended in capitulation. A series of 'parallels' would be constructed - trenches running parallel to the defensive works. The first would provide cover for the next parallel, which would be closer to the target.

Cornwallis knew exactly how relentless the progress of a siege could be, having taken part in the capture of Charleston the previous year. His only hope was to delay the advance of the parallel trenches until he could be rescued by Clinton. This could be achieved by his own artillery, and by launching sorties from his lines to disrupt the allies' work. His next move was therefore puzzling.

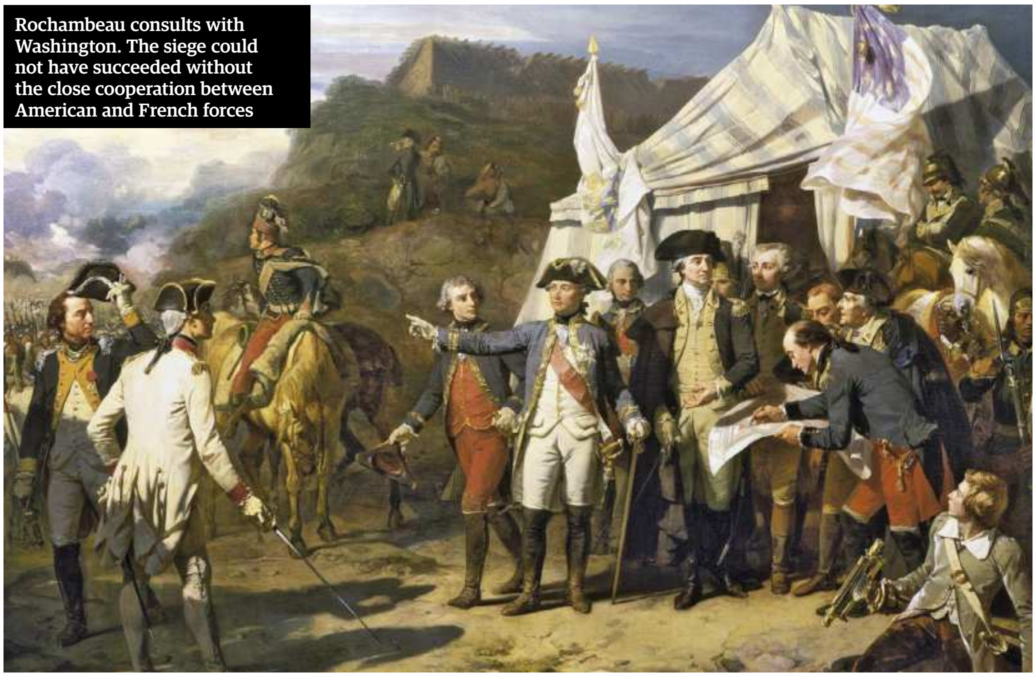
On the morning of 29 September, Washington was shocked to find that Cornwallis had evacuated his outer line during the night. The extensive works, including several formidable redoubts, might have held the Americans at bay for some time, but Cornwallis felt he did not have enough men to hold it against such superior numbers. His much shorter interior line would therefore be called upon. The decision has been criticised and certainly shortened the siege by a few days at least, but with something like 3,000 men out of action with illness, Cornwallis obviously felt he had no choice.

There was also the matter of another letter from Clinton, which arrived that night and talked of a relief effort, including 5,000 men, leaving New York by 5 October. Cornwallis believed he had to hold out for just a few more days.

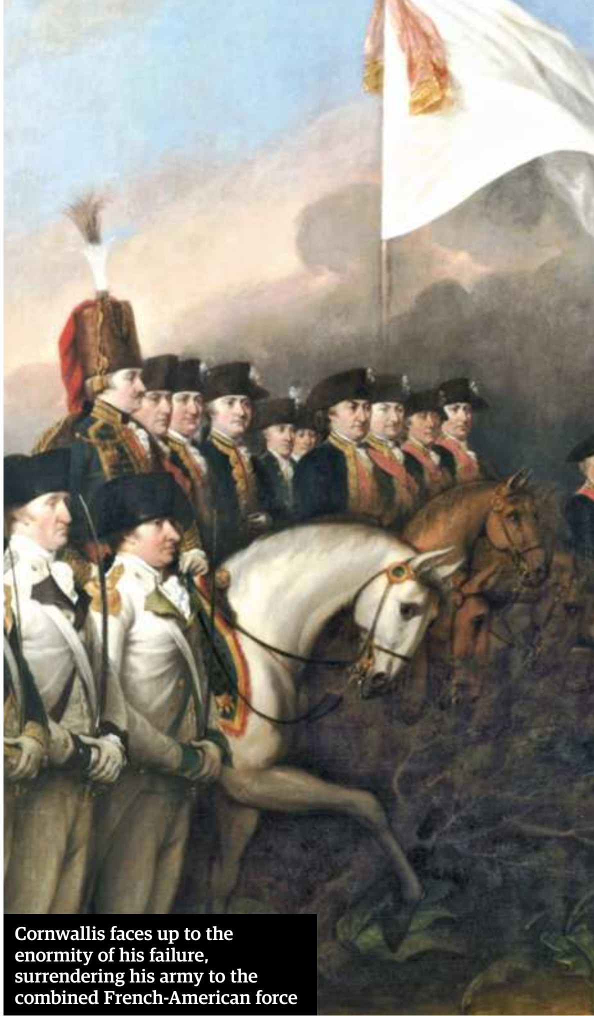
The siege opens

The inner line would still present an obstacle. Two redoubts protected Yorktown's right flank, with three guarding the left. Three more sat at the rear of the town to cover the coast. By far the most important, however, were two further redoubts in front of the left flank, redoubts Nine and Ten. A more substantial position, known as the 'Fusiliers' Redoubt', was retained, well in advance of the right flank, and was supported by Royal Navy ships in the York River.

Cornwallis had scratched together 65 pieces of artillery, including some scavenged from the navy, and he arranged these in 14 batteries through his defensive works (there were 20 more cannon in the Gloucester defences). They would make life uncomfortable for the American and French soldiers constructing their approaches, but the biggest guns at his disposal were 18-pounders.



Rochambeau consults with Washington. The siege could not have succeeded without the close cooperation between American and French forces



Cornwallis faces up to the enormity of his failure, surrendering his army to the combined French-American force

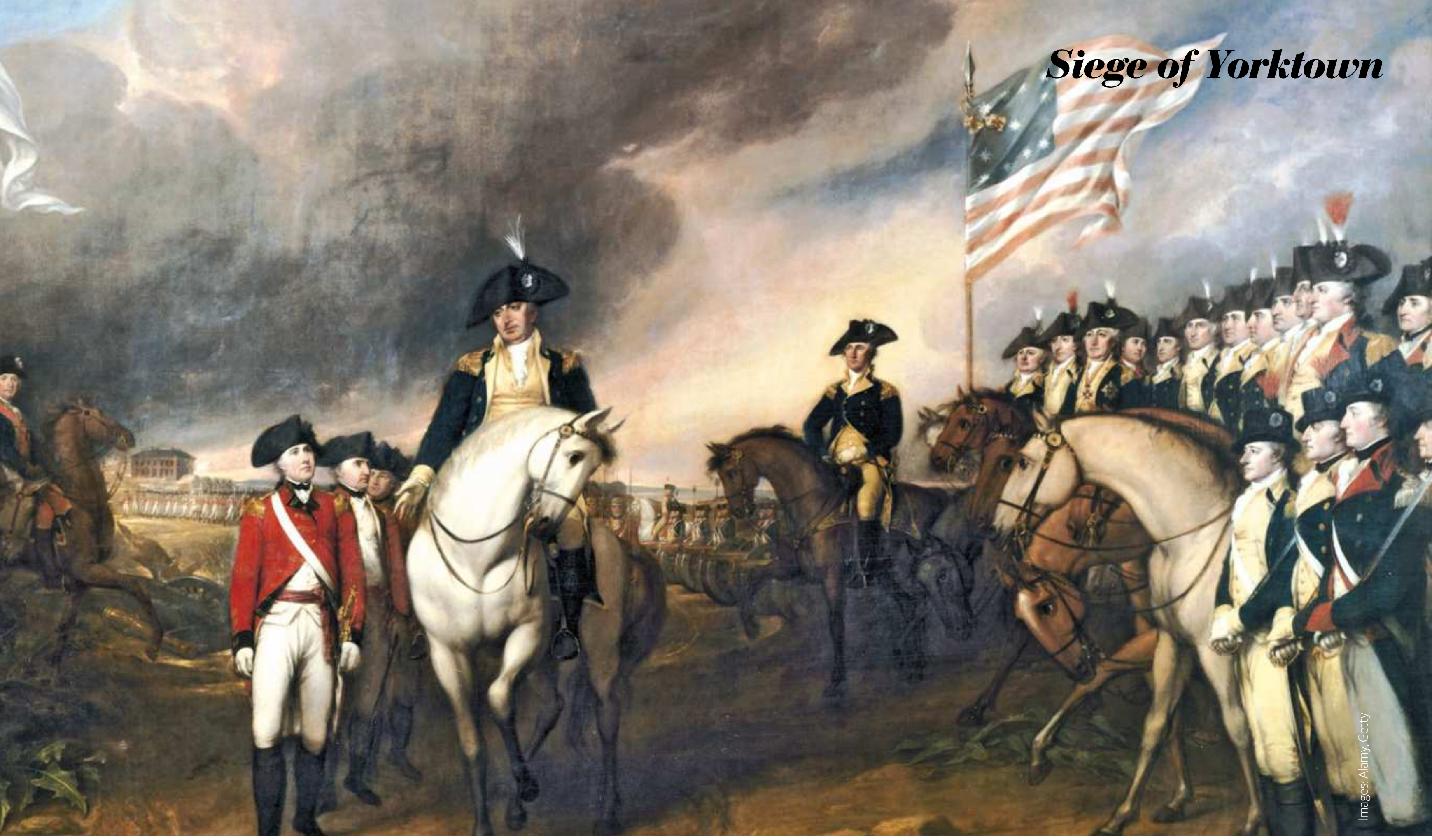
Once Washington had his batteries erected, he would be able to aim 24-pounders at the British works. It would be a hopeless mismatch.

Skirmishing broke out in front of the Fusiliers' Redoubt as the Americans took possession of the outer perimeter and probed forwards, and the infamous light cavalry commander Banastre Tarleton led a raid that carried off the American officer Alexander Scammell, but this was little more than sparring. The real work was yet to begin.

The French engineers with Washington knew their trade, so Cornwallis would normally have started to launch sorties as soon as siege works began. Instead, he remained surprisingly passive. British artillery raged at the men converting the outer defensive perimeter into an offensive platform, but no sorties were launched. Perhaps Cornwallis would do more as the Americans came closer - the outer defensive line was about 0.8 kilometres (0.5 miles) from the inner works.

The British bombardment caused few casualties but did impede building on the lines, because every time the Americans saw a muzzle flash they took cover. The British, already running low on ammunition, began to ignite powder in the muzzles of their guns to simulate shots. The effect on the American soldiers was much the same, but a precious cannonball was not wasted.

The early days of October also saw the last serious move by the British, with Tarleton leading a raid from Gloucester, in which he fought an inconclusive battle with French light cavalry and infantry. It was to be the last act of one of the most controversial figures of the entire war, as the French then bottled him up with the rest of the British garrison at Gloucester.



Images: Alamy, Getty

On 7 October, Cornwallis surveyed the land in front of his lines to see that the Americans had begun work on their first parallel, to the front of his left flank. A second, diversionary trench had been dug in front of the Fusiliers' Redoubt, where the 23rd Regiment was based. The Americans started to construct batteries in the first parallel, but still Cornwallis did not launch raids against them. By 9 October, the allies were ready to begin their bombardment of the British line.

It proved to be spectacular. "We could find no refuge in or out of town," wrote one of the German troops with Cornwallis. "The people fled to the waterside and hid in hastily contrived shelters on the banks, but many of them were killed by bursting bombs." Cornwallis's headquarters were destroyed and he resorted to holding staff meetings in a cave from that point.

The following day Cornwallis heard from Clinton again. The relief effort was now not anticipated to leave New York before 12 October. Cornwallis had been expecting its imminent arrival. As more American and French batteries became serviceable throughout the day, the bombardment of Yorktown increased in severity. HMS Charon was struck by heated shot, caught fire and sank, and the British artillery was steadily silenced as guns were hit.

Two more allied batteries opened up on 11 October, and Cornwallis was becoming desperate. "Nothing but a direct move to York River, which includes a successful naval action, can save me," he informed Clinton.

The second parallel

The construction of the second parallel brought defeat closer for the British. The allies were now as close as 180 metres (200 yards) from the British lines. Another German soldier noted the scene in Yorktown: "One saw men lying nearly everywhere, who were mortally wounded and whose heads, arms, and legs had been shot off. Also one saw wounded continually dragged and carried down by the water."

In order to complete the second parallel, however, redoubts Nine and Ten needed to be captured. With more and more British guns out of action, the artillery duel had become one-sided, and Washington now pummelled the two redoubts for three days in preparation for an assault. Redoubt Nine held around 120 men, Hessians and British, while Redoubt Ten held around 70. Washington decided to attack during the night of 14 October.

One saw men lying nearly everywhere, who were mortally wounded and whose heads, arms, and legs had been shot off

The redoubts were strongly constructed and protected by fraise work (sharpened stakes) and abatis (chopped down trees with their branches sharpened and facing the enemy). They were no match, however, for a determined assault. A force of 400 American light infantry was allocated Redoubt Ten, with 400 French troops tackling Nine.

The noise of axes at work alerted the garrison of Redoubt Ten - the Americans were cutting their way through the abatis that protected the position. Hand grenades hurled by the British inflicted some casualties, but they were quickly overwhelmed by the onrushing Americans, who charged with unloaded muskets. It had cost Washington just nine dead and 31 injured to capture the position and all the redcoats in it.

Redoubt Nine inflicted a heavier toll on the attackers. Held up by the abatis, the French suffered badly from musket fire from the garrison before they could make their numbers tell. The attackers lost 15 killed and 77 wounded, and just over half of the garrison escaped, although 18 were killed and 50 taken prisoner.

The two redoubts were quickly absorbed into the second parallel, plunging Cornwallis into despair. "The safety of the place is therefore so precarious," he wrote to Clinton, "that I cannot recommend that the fleet and army should run great risk in endeavouring to save us."

Perhaps aware that his passivity in the face of the allied advance might be questioned, Cornwallis organised a symbolic sortie during the early hours of 16 October, and then tried a desperate evacuation of Yorktown. Bad weather foiled this last attempt to escape the carefully laid trap he had found himself in, and on the following morning Cornwallis surrendered.

The last offensive force the British had in the field had been eliminated. Legend has it that the band played The World Turned Upside Down as the garrison marched out to lay down its arms. This is debated (some claim there were no musicians in Cornwallis's army), but a more apt tune could hardly have been chosen. The American War of Independence was all but lost.

Aftermath

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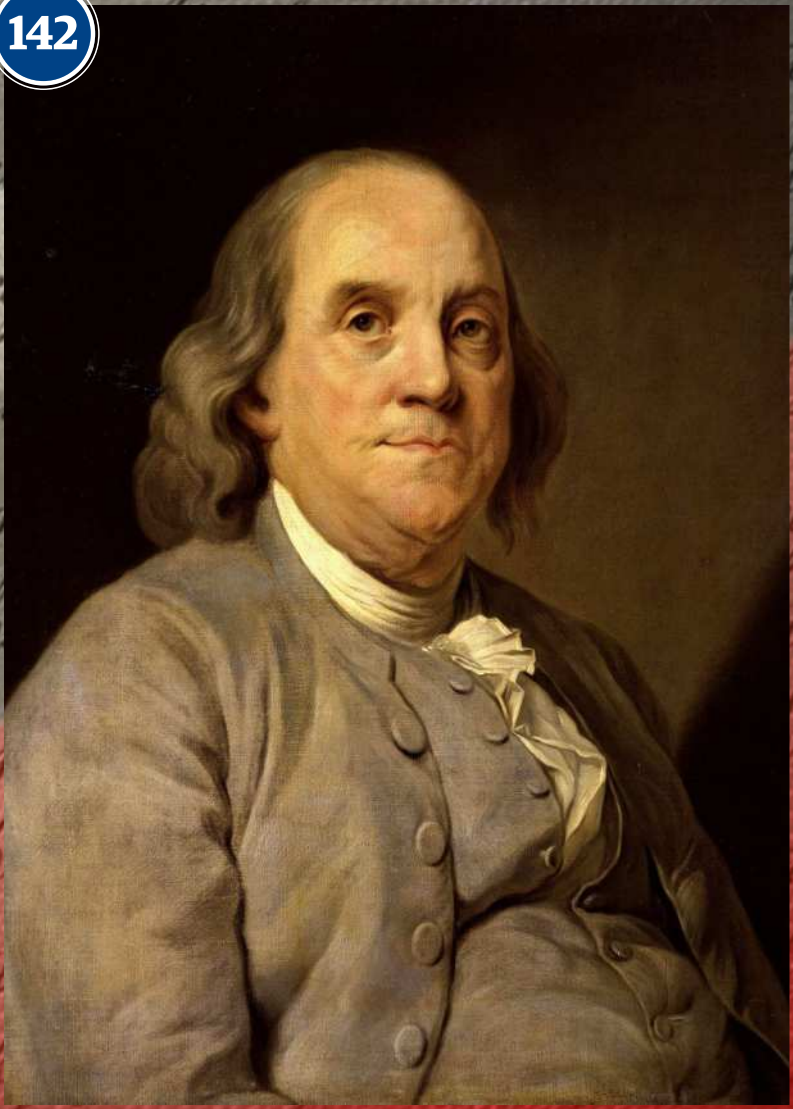

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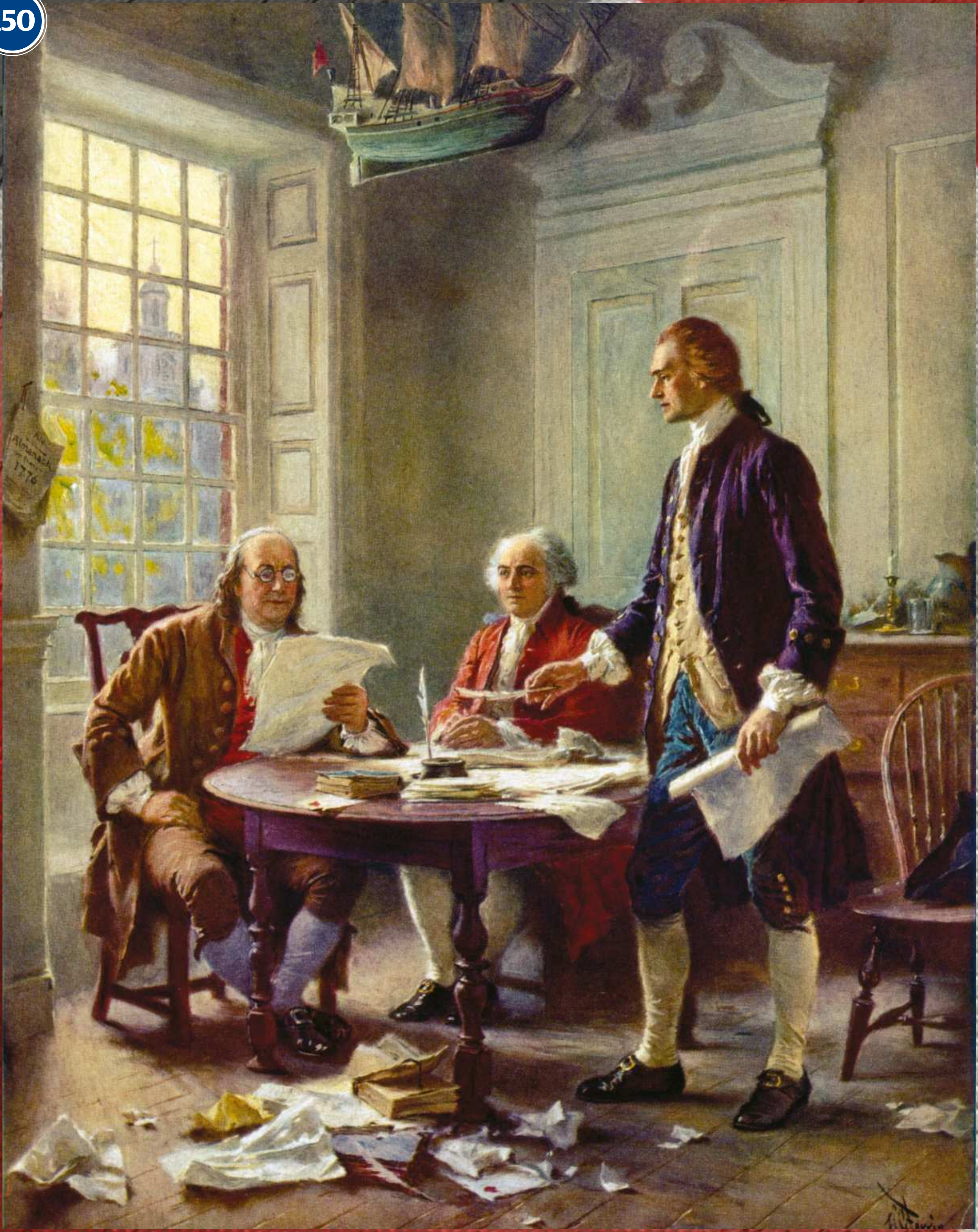

Almanack
1776

The Treaty of Paris, 1783

Months of negotiations resulted in ten statements that sealed the fate of a nation

In typically grandiose language, the 1783 Treaty of Paris began with the promise "to forget all past misunderstandings and differences that have unhappily interrupted the good correspondence and friendship which [Britain and America] mutually wish to restore, and to establish such a beneficial and satisfactory intercourse, between the two countries upon the ground of reciprocal advantages and mutual convenience as may promote and secure to both perpetual peace and harmony".

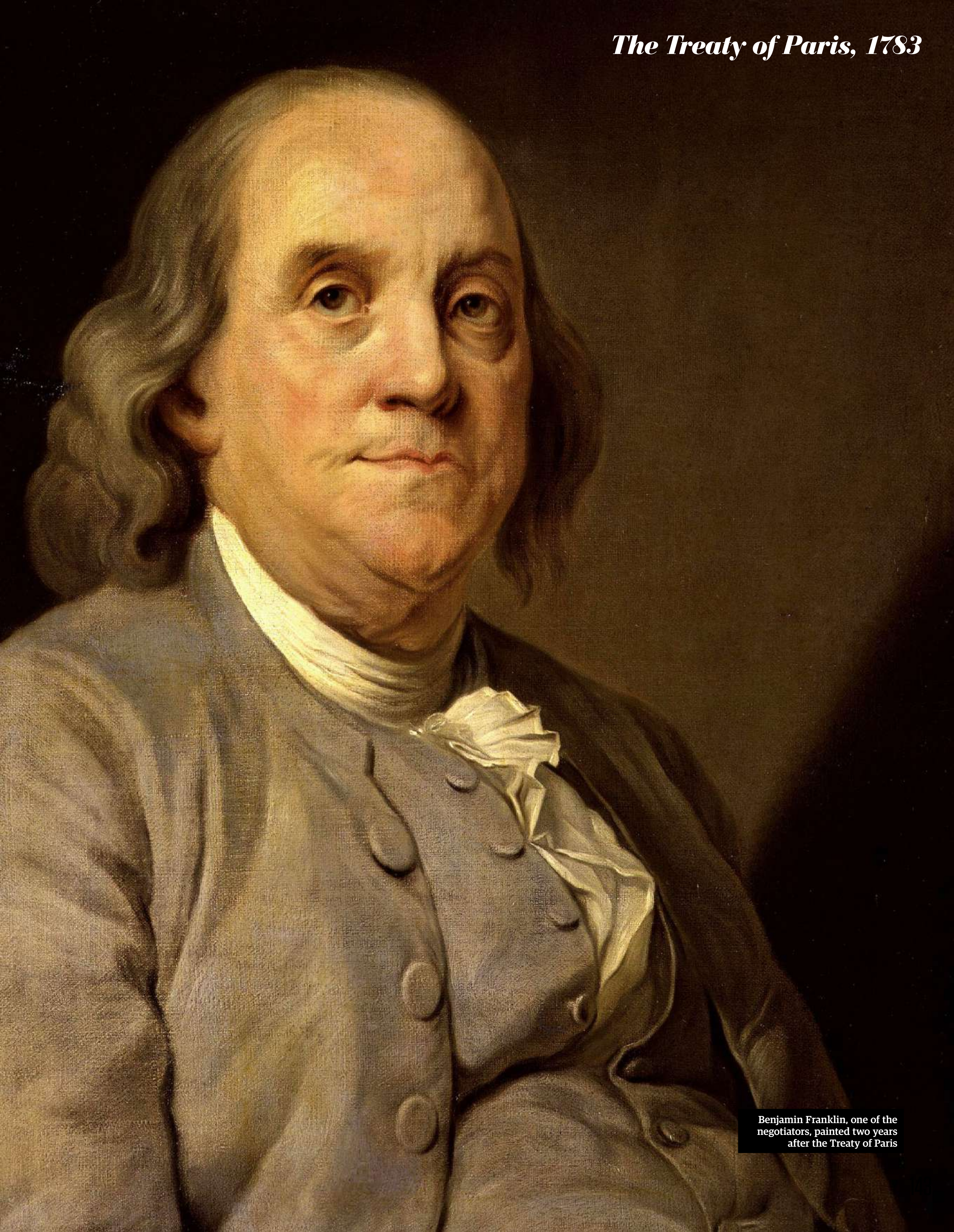
The "perpetual peace and harmony" bit might have been something of a stretch, but it was a promising conclusion to the events of the American Revolutionary War - particularly for America. The still rather vaguely formed United States was reborn as an independent nation, and a new player on the world's political stage.

The principal negotiators representing the American side were John Adams, Benjamin Franklin and John Jay. On the British side were the Member of Parliament and diplomat David Hartley, and the former merchant and slave trader Richard Oswald. The British prime minister Lord Shelburne chose the latter as a Peace Commissioner thanks to his knowledge of America's geography and trade, his previous role as a consultant to the British in matters of the Revolutionary War, and his acquaintance with Franklin. The British would somewhat come to regret placing him in the position.

Peace talks began in April 1782 and continued for most of the rest of the year. With the war having grown exponentially into a global conflict, the negotiations also included France and Spain, with France represented in the main by Foreign Minister Charles Gravier, comte de Vergennes. In September, Vergennes tabled a suggestion that the United States would be allowed their independence but must contain themselves to the land east of the Appalachians. Britain would retain the Northwest Territory, and Spain, in exchange for abandoning its claim to Gibraltar, would assume control of a proposed Native American state in the Great Lakes

A portrait of the signing of the treaty was attempted, but the British side refused to pose

The Treaty of Paris, 1783



Benjamin Franklin, one of the negotiators, painted two years after the Treaty of Paris

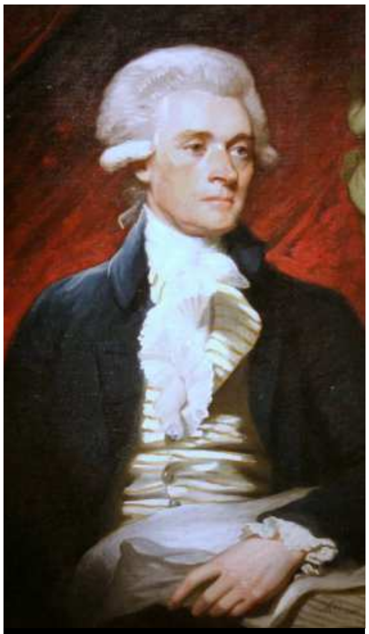
Ratification Day woes

The American Confederation Congress's ratification of the provisional Treaty of Paris at Annapolis, Maryland on 14 January 1784, officially brought the American Revolutionary War to a close. But the treaty almost fell at this important hurdle. While the Articles of Confederation ruled that a minimum of nine of the 13 states needed to be present to enter into a treaty, only seven were present at the Maryland State House, thanks to difficult travelling conditions for the rest owing to the severe winter weather.

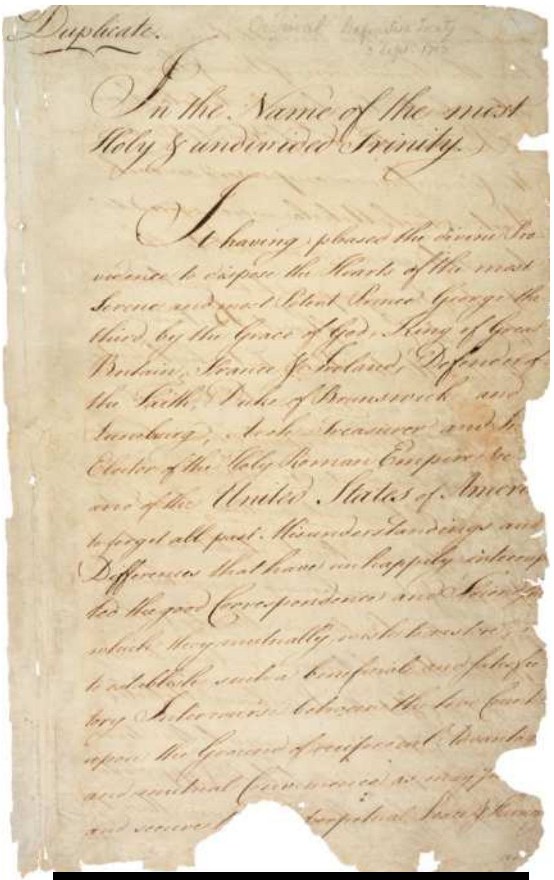
Some argued that they were merely ratifying an existing treaty, rather than entering into a new one, and the rule therefore didn't apply. But Thomas Jefferson argued that nine states meant nine states, and representation by any fewer would place America in a compromised position, potentially giving Britain the excuse to back out of the treaty when they realised its American ratification had been fudged.

Jefferson headed up a committee to come up with a compromise. The solution they arrived at was a placeholder making explicit the extraordinary circumstances, and emphasising that the seven states present were at least in unanimous agreement regarding the Paris Treaty's ratification. A delay of three months would be requested pending a full Congress, but the agreement of the seven states would suffice if Britain insisted.

In the end, however, the compromise document proved to be unnecessary. Delegates from Connecticut and South Carolina arrived at the eleventh hour having beaten the weather. Nine states were present to ratify the treaty after all.



Founding Father Thomas Jefferson scrambled to get the treaty ratified in less than ideal circumstances



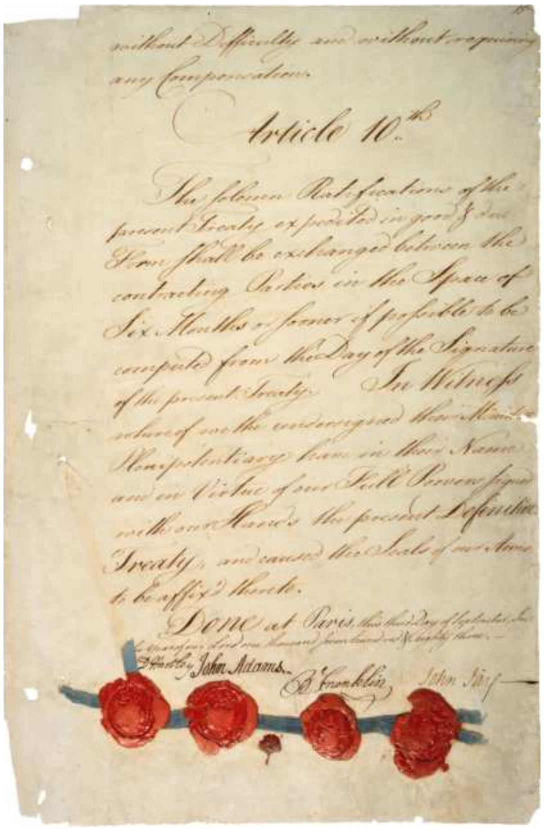
Duplicate.

Original Definitive Treaty
3 Sept 1783

In the Name of the most
Holy & undivided Trinity.

It having pleased the divine Pro-
vidence to dispose the Hearts of the most
Serene and most Potent Prince George the
third, by the Grace of God, King of Great
Britain, France & Ireland, Defender of
the Faith, Duke of Brunswick and
Lunebourg, Arch Treasurer and Pr
Elector of the Holy Roman Empire &c
and of the United States of Ameri
to forget all past Misunderstandings and
Differences that have unhappily interrup
ted the good Correspondence and Friend
which they mutually wish to restore, a
to establish such a beneficial and satisfac
tory Intercourse between the two Count
upon the Ground of reciprocal Advanta
and mutual Convenience as may
and secure perpetual Peace & Harmo

The final page of the treaty, signed by John Adams, Benjamin Franklin and John Jay



without Difficulty and without requiring
any Compensation.

Article 10th.

The solemn Ratifications of the
present Treaty expedited in good & due
Form shall be exchanged between the
contracting Parties in the Space of
Six Months or sooner if possible to be
computed from the Day of the Signature
of the present Treaty. In Witness
whereof we the undersigned their Ministers
Plenipotentiary have in their Name
and in Virtue of our Full Powers signed
with our Hands the present Definitive
Treaty, and caused the Seals of our Arms
to be affix'd thereto.

Done at Paris, this third Day of September, In
the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty three.

D Hartley John Adams. B Franklin John Jay

"In the name of the most holy and undivided trinity..." The first page of the Treaty of Paris, 1783

region. The Americans resoundingly rejected that proposal, and subsequently cut France and Spain from their negotiating table altogether, opting to speak only to the British. Shelburne, realising that, despite the war, America was temperamentally more akin to Britain, and that generosity to the Americans would weaken America's awkward ties to France, was happy to accede to the request. Franklin, meanwhile, strongly hinted to Oswald that negotiating favourably with America would pay great dividends to Britain.

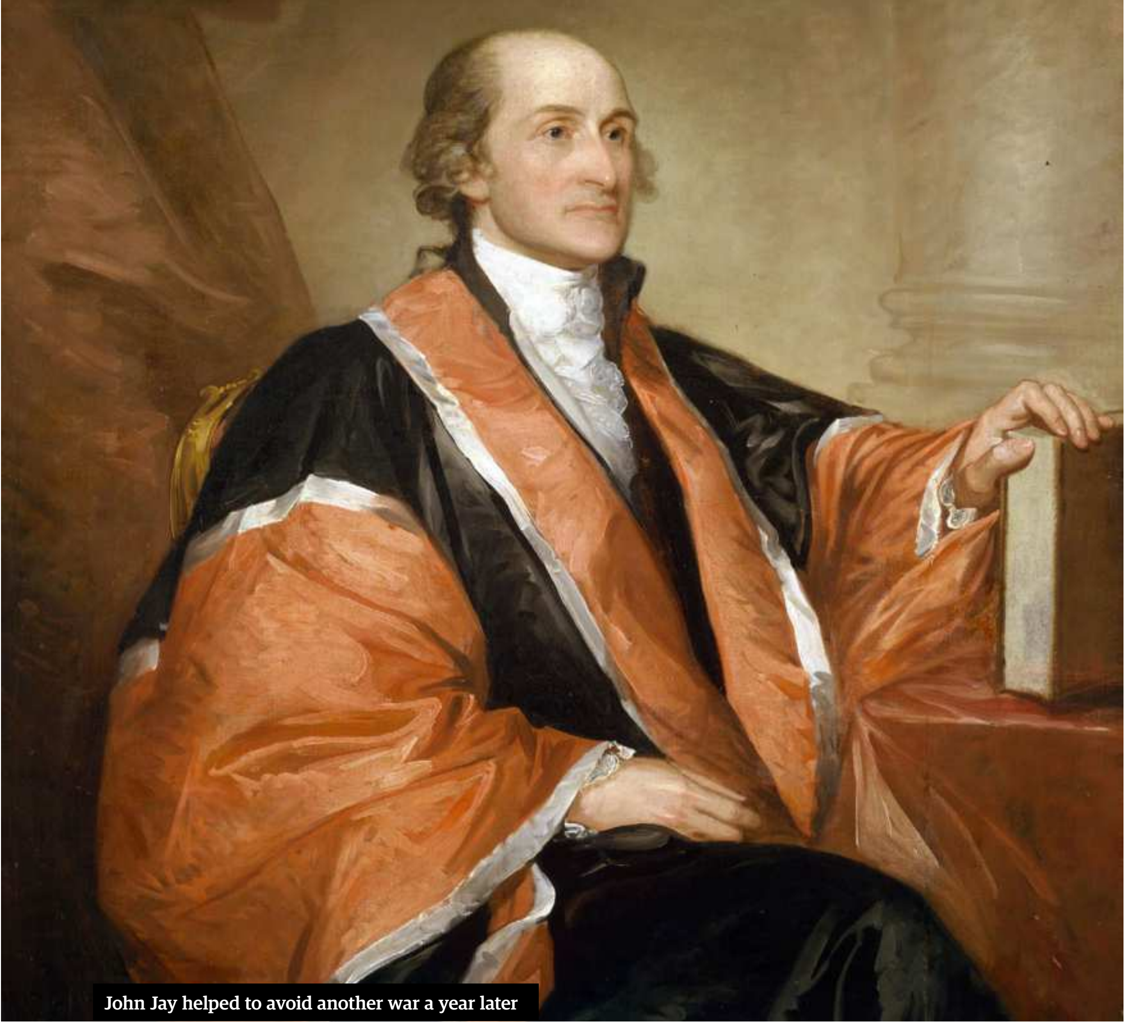
The Treaty of Paris would henceforth be an accord between America and Britain alone, with the wider international agreements thrashed out in separate documents known collectively as the Peace of Paris (where Britain surrendered Tobago and Senegal to France, Spain kept Minorca and half of Florida, and the Netherlands capitulated British navigation rights in Dutch waters and gave up the Indian port city of Nagapattinam).

Franklin fell ill for a time, and the talks struggled thanks to the truculence of John Jay, who even caused problems by challenging Oswald's credentials as a negotiator. But with Franklin's eventual recovery, the situation began once more to look optimistic.

Franklin began by demanding Britain's cessation of Canada to the independent America, but realistically knew that this was not a term Shelburne would ever accept, and fairly quickly backed down from that stance. The only really major sticking point was the issue of how American Loyalists to the British Crown should be treated after independence was achieved. Oswald insisted the loyalists should be compensated for their loss of property and status. Franklin countered that they deserved nothing, having "done infinite mischief to our properties by wantonly burning farmhouses, villages and towns". He threatened that if the British insisted on Loyalist compensation, America would counter-claim compensation against Britain for the havoc Britain's own forces had wreaked and the depredations the colonists had suffered during the war. Oswald argued the case for months, only finally dropping the issue in November. And on the thirtieth of that month, the preliminary peace terms were finally agreed. At this point, they were provisional, but they did not ultimately change on their journey to becoming the officially signed Treaty of Paris.

Article 1 *acknowledged the United States (specifically New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, the Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia) to be "free, sovereign and independent", and the British relinquished "all claims to the government, propriety, and territorial rights of the same and every part thereof".*

Article 2 *drew up the official boundaries of the United States' various territories.*



John Jay helped to avoid another war a year later

> "Not a single Native American representative had been present – or invited – to the Paris talks"

Article 3 *established fishing rights for the US in the Grand Banks, the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and off the coast of Newfoundland (and also specified where American fishermen were allowed to dry and cure what they caught).*

Article 4 *agreed that all legally binding pre-existing debts on both sides should be settled.*

Article 5 *agreed "the restitution of all estates, rights, and properties, which have been confiscated belonging to real British subjects" and American loyalists to Britain, "consistent not only with justice and equity but with that spirit of conciliation which on the return of the blessings of peace should universally prevail."*

Article 6 *promised that there would be no confiscation of the property of Loyalists in the future.*

Article 7 *secured the release of all prisoners of war on both sides. The British were forbidden from "carrying away" and required to forfeit any British property that was still in the United States at the time (including slaves).*

Article 8 *established that the Mississippi River would be accessible in perpetuity to both the Americans and the British.*

Article 9 *established that places taken by force by either side during the war would be restored without argument to their previous owners, but with no requirement to pay compensation.*

Article 10 *promised that the treaty would be ratified within six months of its signing by both sides.*

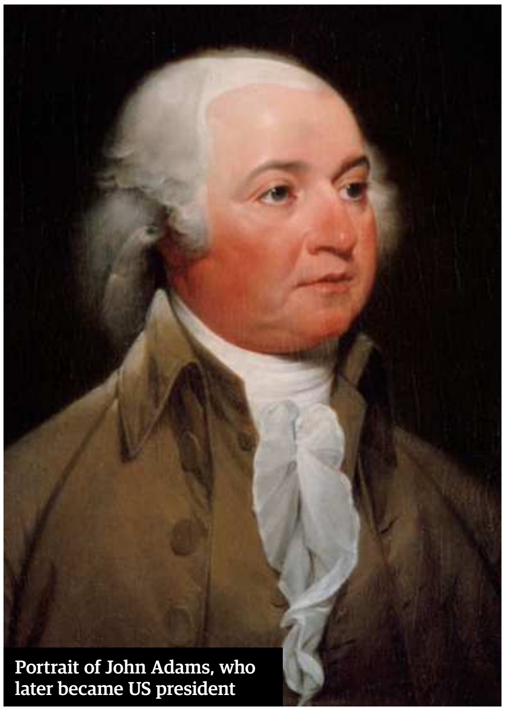
The treaty was signed at the Hotel d'York in Paris on 3 September 1783 by Adams, Franklin, Jay and Hartley, ratified by the US Congress of the Confederation the following January, and by the British in April. The ratified documents were formally exchanged between the Americans and the British on 12 May 1784.

In Britain, there were mutterings that Oswald might as well have been negotiating for the other side, such was the generosity of the final terms in favour of the United States. "He plead only the cause of America, not of Britain," complained Charles Lennox, the Duke of Richmond, at the same time urging Oswald's recall and removal from his post. Oswald was forced to resign. It was in many ways an unfair treatment of a man who had recognised earlier than some of his colleagues just how beneficial friendly economic ties with a new America could be for Britain. With huge new territories earmarked for the rapid growth of the American population – territories in the west, gained from Britain, that would eventually become states equal in status to the original Thirteen – there would be lucrative markets for British merchants to exploit for generations to come. America had won its independent future, but Britain would reap substantial rewards.

The potential benefits for Britain of having negotiated (and to some extent created) a major new trading partner did much to soften the blow to America's former sovereign of losing its former colonies. Vergennes resentfully observed, "The British buy peace rather than make it." America's indigenous population too, were thunderstruck by what was explicitly a betrayal of previous treaties, alliances and agreements made under the Royal Proclamation of 1763. Britain had reserved valuable lands for permanent settlement by Native Americans. Under the new treaty, all those agreements were now abandoned, and the fate of Native Americans in the newly independent America uncertain. Not a single Native American representative had been present – or invited – to the Paris talks.

The treaty was not, however, observed to the letter. Some states refused to return the property of British Loyalists. The British did, in fact, ship their slaves out of America. Disputes over boundaries continued – including with Spain. And having agreed to evacuate the region, the British maintained a military presence in America, claiming the right to keep its forts manned until America met its own treaty obligations to repay its debts to the Crown. They even built a new fort in Ohio in 1794, leading to the necessity of a further set of negotiations. The Jay Treaty, so called because John Jay once again engineered it, averted another war and facilitated a decade of more cordial dealings between the two nations.

Britain turned its attention to other international issues, while America turned its attention inwards. Its hard-won independence was now a legal and diplomatic fact, but the political organisation of the vast new country would be a struggle of its own. Could the States work together independently without the need for a monolithic central government indistinguishable from the power from which America had just cut free? The battles over the Constitution were only just beginning.



Portrait of John Adams, who later became US president

Building a nation

Finding common ground in government presented a major challenge as the colonies emerged from revolution and set about building a nation

The Founding Fathers of the United States, those men who led the American Revolution and then worked to establish a framework for the government of their new country, realised that simply declaring independence from Great Britain and achieving that independence through insurrection would not lead to long-term stability or serve as the firm footing for the colonies to survive as one nation.

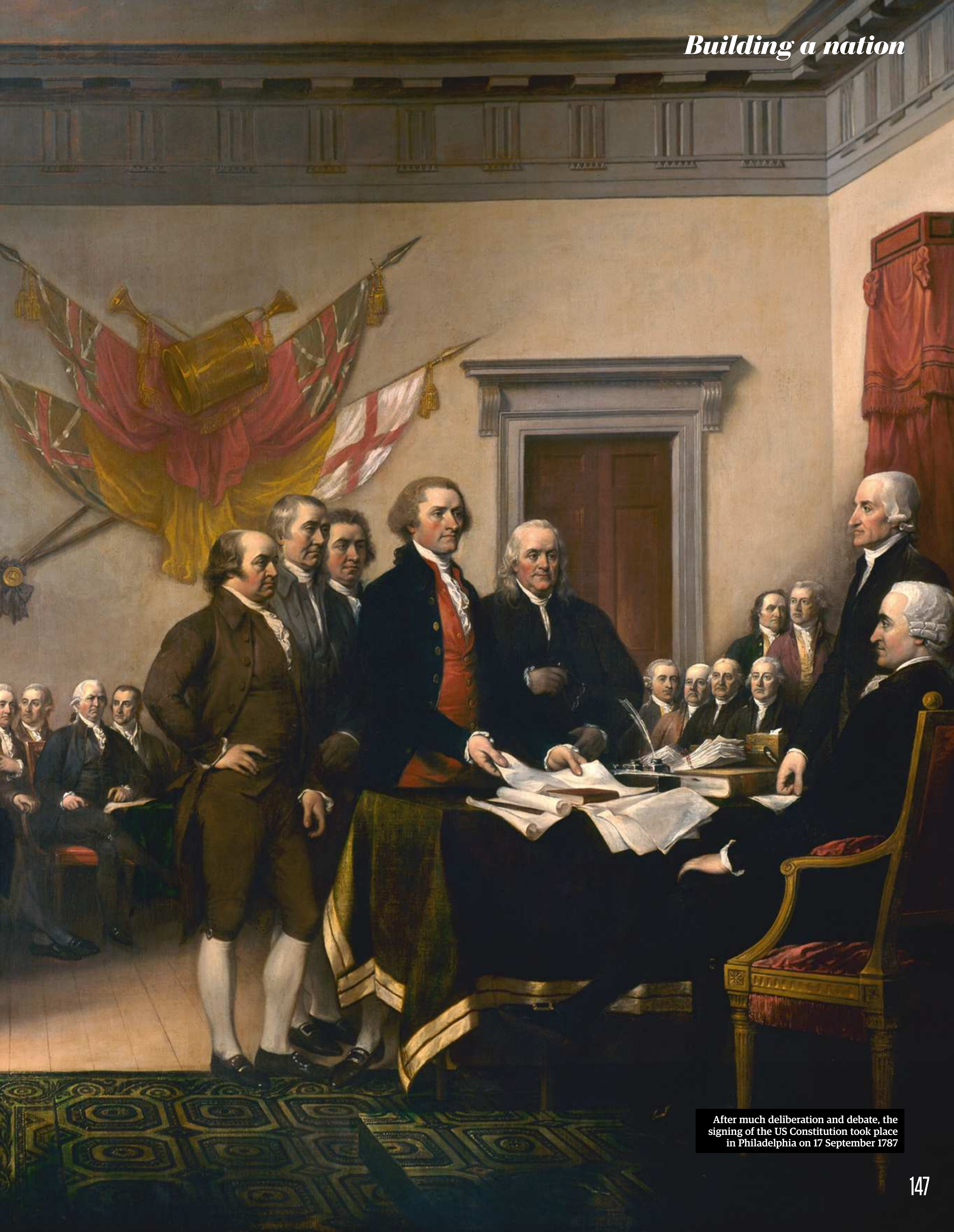
Towards the end of the revolution came the need to form a stable system of government for the fledgling nation

In the midst of the War for Independence, a committee appointed by the Second Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia to draft a document that might bind the colonies together while preserving the rights of individual states in the context of a central government. The committee convened on 12 July 1776, just eight days after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Sixteen months later, on 15 November 1777, a draft was presented to the colonies for ratification. Still, it took more than three years for all 13 to agree to the principles of the Articles of Confederation, which became effective on 1 March 1781.

The Articles created a Congress with specific powers, such as the conduct of foreign relations, making war and peace, settling boundary disputes, and establishing a common currency. However, those powers not expressly given to this relatively weak body in a so-called "league of friendship" were reserved for each state to "retain its sovereignty, freedom and independence, and every power, jurisdiction and right." Congress was not vested with the authority to levy or collect taxes or impose its decisions on the states. There was no provision for a chief executive or a judicial branch of government.

The Articles of Confederation were, by design, intended to curb the authority of a central government. After all, the current revolution was intended to throw off the yoke of an oppressive 'despot'. However, issues emerged soon enough that indicated the necessity of establishing a national government that would serve a nation of diverse beliefs, economic conditions and world views, a nation that was growing and whose inhabitants already numbered more than four million people.

The immediate catalyst for the discourse that resulted in the drafting of the Constitution of the United States occurred in the summer of 1786 when Daniel Shays led a group of disgruntled



After much deliberation and debate, the signing of the US Constitution took place in Philadelphia on 17 September 1787

“They determined that a new, stronger national government was a prerequisite to stability and future prosperity”

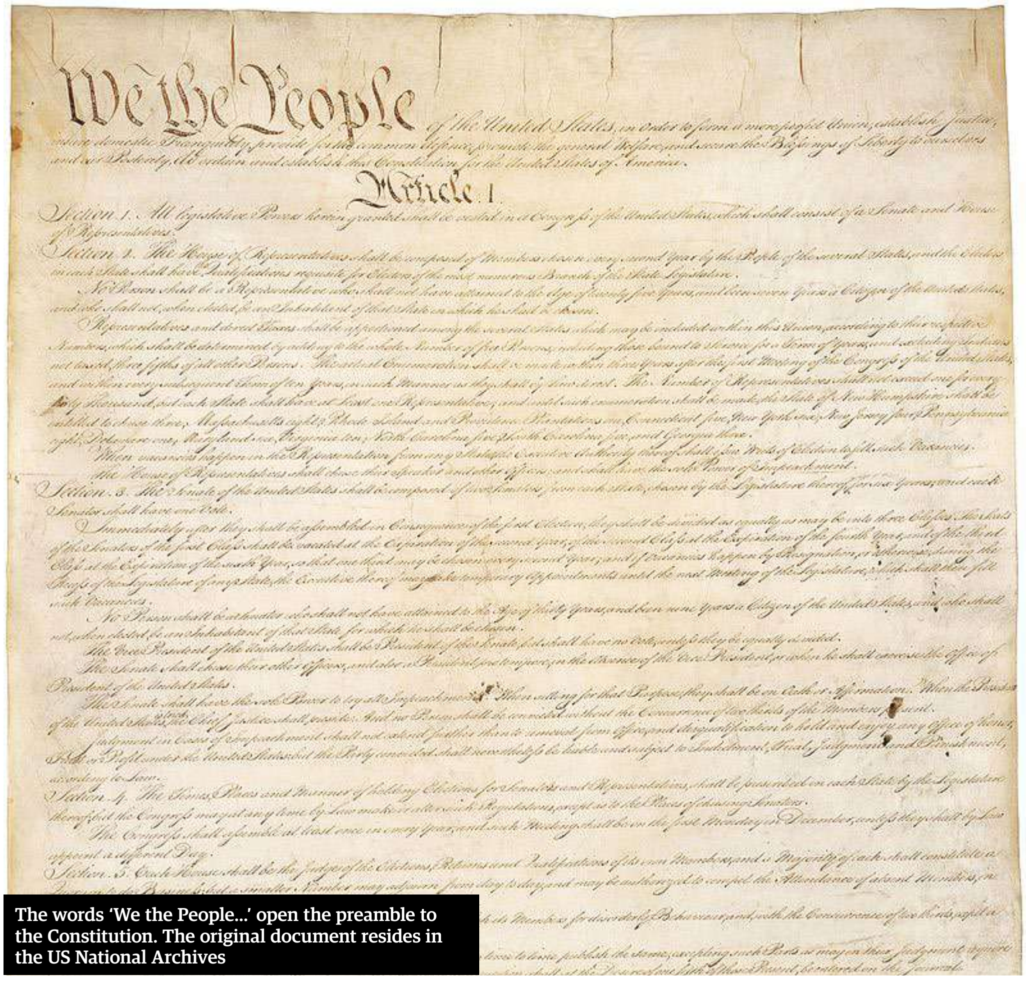
Massachusetts farmers in an uprising against creditors and others who they believed had made them the victims of exploitation. Shays’s Rebellion lasted until June 1787, when the Massachusetts state militia put down the revolt. The national government had no authority to intervene, call up troops, or otherwise act to restore order. The message was clear. Another such threat might result in the total collapse of the national government, such as it was. Each state would then be left to its own devices, even to the extent that its neighbours were in peril of foreign intervention, annexation, or a descent into chaos.

At this critical moment in the life of the fledgling country, a core group of statesmen, including Alexander Hamilton, John Adams, John Jay, James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington and others, determined that a new, stronger national government was a prerequisite to stability and future prosperity. Collectively, these men, along with numerous others, had already left their mark on the new nation. Jefferson authored the Declaration of Independence but did not attend the coming constitutional convention. The aging Franklin served on the committee of five that assisted in its final draft and served as ambassador to France during a critical period of the revolution. Hamilton, Jay and Madison authored the Federalist Papers that lucidly set out the tenets of the proposed Constitution. Hamilton, in fact, is rightly considered the father of the Federalist party and the architect of the nation’s financial system. Madison shied away from the sobriquet ‘Father of the Constitution’, but his tremendous knowledge of history and varied forms of government, along with his interest in balancing states’ rights with the need for a strong central administration, brought an immeasurable contribution.

By early 1787, Washington had spent some time in retirement at Mount Vernon, his sprawling estate in Virginia. Called from repose to preside over the constitutional convention that would assemble in Philadelphia to determine a new form of national government, he offered his leadership to the country once again. “We are either a united people under one head, for Federal purposes, or we are 13 independent sovereignties, eternally counteracting each other.”

In the spring of that year, after 74 delegates had been chosen, the framing of the Constitution of the United States began. Recalcitrant Rhode Island refused to participate. Although their differences sometimes seemed insurmountable, the delegates agreed to a man that only a republic, its power to govern derived from the people, could accurately perpetuate the high principles for which the revolution had been fought. Heated debate swirled around the structure of the new government. Delegates from small states feared that the large states would dominate future deliberations if representatives to the proposed congress were elected only on the basis of population. Two gentlemen from Connecticut, Roger Sherman and Oliver Ellsworth, proposed a compromise, a bicameral legislature with a House of Representatives elected from each state according to population and a Senate with each state seating two representatives elected by the members of the House. It was genius.

In addition, the delegates established the office of president as the executive branch of government and specified that it would be occupied by one man rather than a committee. They established a judicial branch of government as well. Each branch eventually achieved the

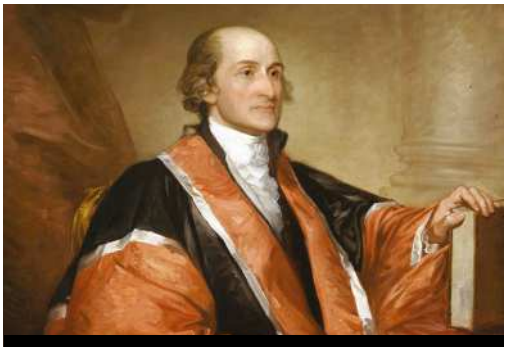


We the People

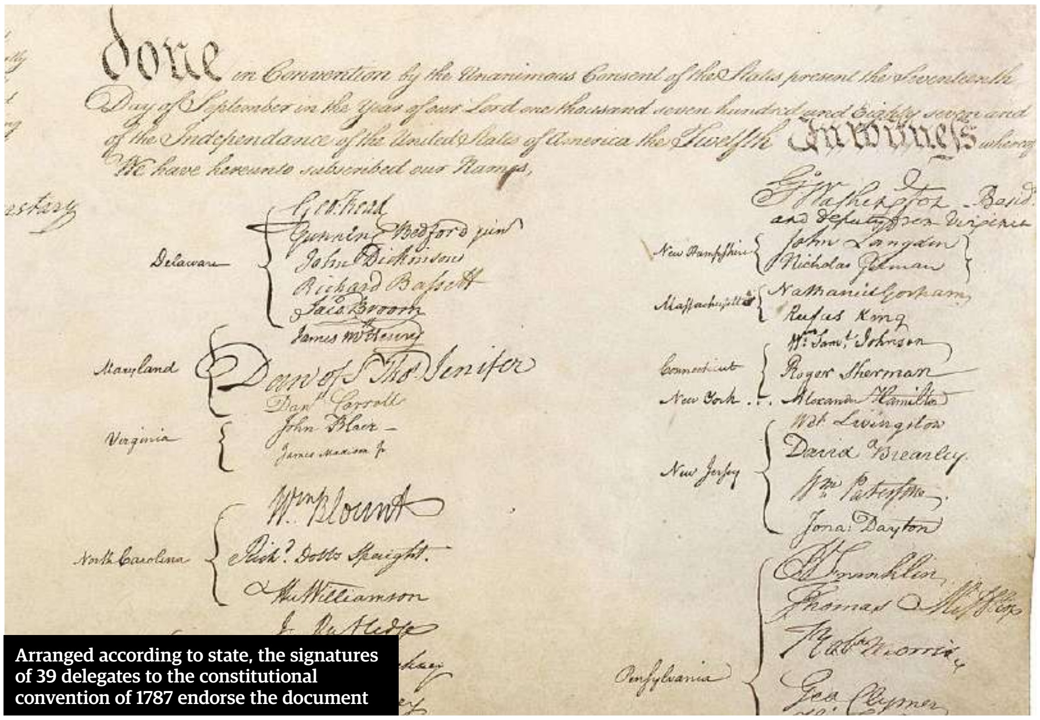
Article. 1

The words ‘We the People…’ open the preamble to the Constitution. The original document resides in the US National Archives

James Madison, the ‘Father of the Constitution,’ was also a principal author of the Federalist Papers



John Jay, one of three authors of the Federalist Papers, was the first Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court



done in Convention by the Unanimous Consent of the States present the Seventeenth Day of September in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and Eighty seven and of the Independance of the United States of America the Twelfth In witness whereof We have hereunto subscribed our Names,

Go: Washington — Presidt and deputy from Virginia

Delaware: Geo: Read, Gunning Bedford jun, John Dickinson, Richard Bassett, Jaco: Broom

Maryland: James McHenry, Dan of St Thos Jenifer, Danl Carroll

Virginia: John Blair —, James Madison Jr.

North Carolina: Wm Blount, Richd Dobbs Spaight, Hu Williamson

New Hampshire: John Langdon, Nicholas Gilman

Massachusetts: Nathaniel Gorham, Rufus King

Connecticut: Wm Saml Johnson, Roger Sherman

New York: Alexander Hamilton

New Jersey: Wil: Livingston, David Brearley, Wm Paterson, Jona: Dayton

Pensylvania: B Franklin, Thomas Mifflin, Robt Morris, Geo. Clymer

Arranged according to state, the signatures of 39 delegates to the constitutional convention of 1787 endorse the document

standing required to provide a system of "checks and balances" so that no single branch might dominate the others. This system survives today. While other issues were left unresolved, there were discussions regarding the institution of slavery, trade, foreign relations and other important topics. Finally, the Constitution's opening phrase, "We the people…" was intended to acknowledge the source of the government's authority.

Ultimately, 55 delegates attended the constitutional convention at various times, and 39 signed the document. On 21 June 1788, the Constitution was ratified and became the law of the land. Still there were those who were wary of its implications. Virginian Patrick Henry, whose pamphlet Common Sense and impassioned "Give me liberty, or give me death!" speech had stoked the revolutionary flame, was solidly against the proposal, noting that he "smelled a rat!"

At a critical moment when the Constitution appeared destined for defeat, Madison prevailed on the divided Virginia delegation, particularly Edmund Randolph, to drop their anti-Federalist objections and support ratification. He assured other doubters that in exchange for their 'yea' votes he would sponsor the drafting and adoption of a 'bill of rights' intended to limit the powers of the central government.

Opponents of the Constitution argued forcefully that it did little to protect the rights of the individual. While the Federalists were generally convinced that it went far enough, Jefferson and others weren't convinced. The ratification of the Constitution without a bill of rights was incomplete. He reasoned, "A bill of rights is what the people are entitled to against every government on Earth."

> Comprising the first ten ratified amendments, the Bill of Rights safeguarded basic individual liberties

Although he personally considered the drafting of the Bill of Rights a "nauseous project," Madison came to realise that it had to be accomplished. The Constitution specified that the process of amendment required approval of three-quarters of the state legislatures.

There were modifications; some measures were dropped. Twelve of an original 17 proposed amendments survived the House and Senate and went to the state legislatures. Ten of these were ratified swiftly, and on 15 December 1791, the Virginia legislature was the last to approve the Bill of Rights.

The ten amendments of the Bill of Rights entrenched basic individual liberties in the theory and practice of the United States government. The first amendment, for example, protected freedom of religion and freedom of speech, the third harkened back to the despised Quartering Act of 1765 and prohibited the billeting of soldiers in private homes during peacetime without the owner's consent. The fourth amendment barred unlawful search and seizure.

Despite their differences, the Founding Fathers had provided the American people with a remarkable document intended to preserve, protect and defend liberty. The amendment process, in itself, alludes to the fact that they realised the Constitution was not perfect and that changing times might require its alteration. It was, however, the basis for a noble experiment in government – the likes of which had not been seen on Earth since Ancient Greece. Still, stern tests lay ahead.

Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, was a leader of the Democratic-Republicans

The two-party system

The two-party system that characterises American politics was born of sectionalism and differing ideological visions

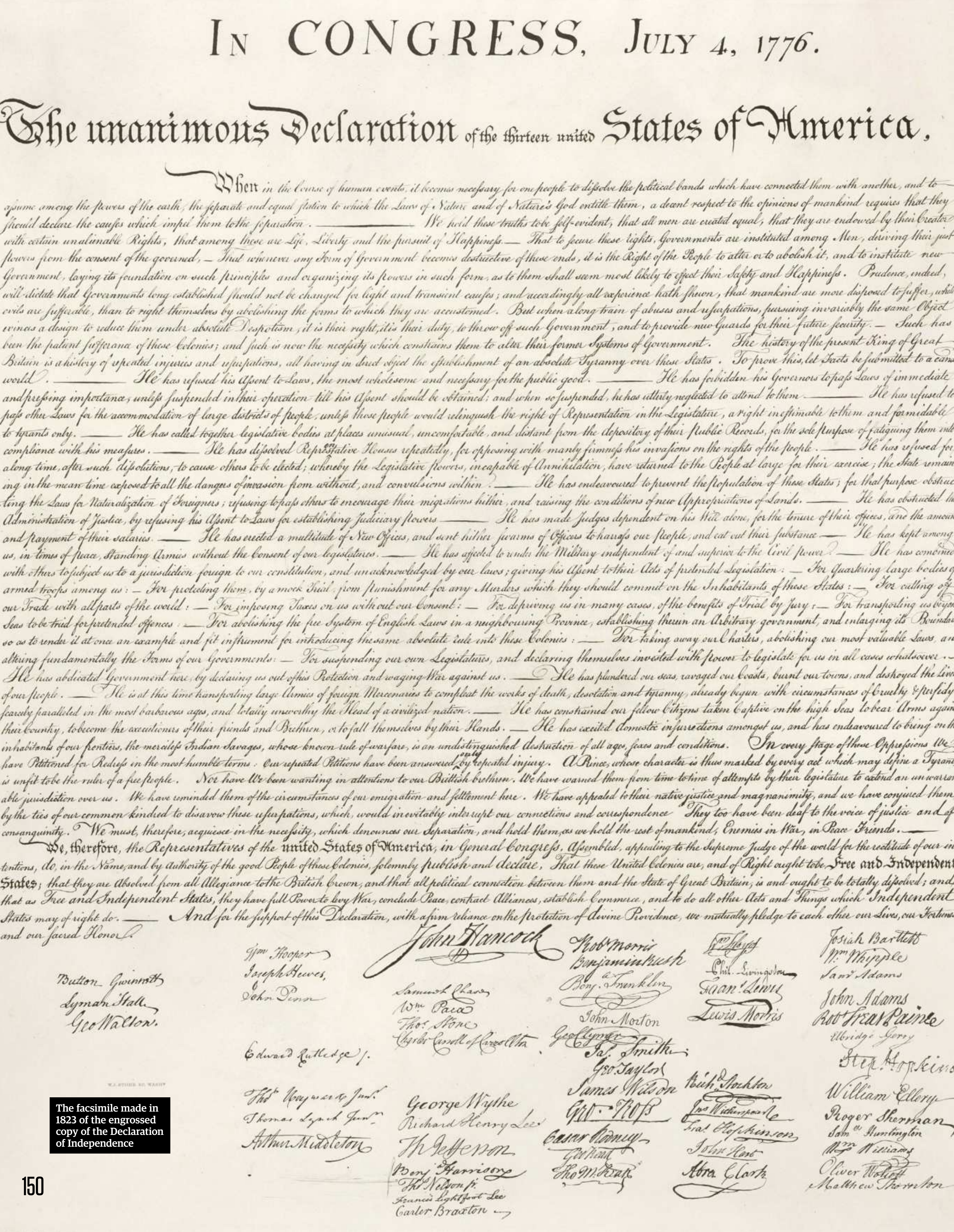
The Founding Fathers initially criticised the idea of political parties. John Adams, for one, believed that party factions were "the greatest of political evils." Thomas Jefferson once said, "If I could not go to Heaven but with a party, I would not go there at all."

Still, within a few years of the ratification of the US Constitution, two major political parties, the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans, had emerged. The genesis of these parties lay in the Federalist assertion for a strong central government, which seemed to contradict the notion of states' and individual rights, which were the main tenets of the Democratic-Republicans.

Sectionalism played a role in their development as well. On 30 April 1789, George Washington was inaugurated as the first president. Subsequently, the Federalist Party began to take shape with the approval of its chief executive, Alexander Hamilton, the first Secretary of the Treasury. While Hamilton shaped early American fiscal processes and policy, his Federalist ideals were embraced primarily by the wealthy, landed merchants and businessmen of the Northeast. The Federalists also emphasised the growth of American industry.

Meanwhile, subsistence farmers, planters and those tied to agricultural livelihoods perceived the preponderance of 'nobly born and wealthy' individuals in government as a threat to their prosperity. Many also decried the new government's neutrality during the French Revolution. These somewhat disaffected citizens found champions for their cause in Jefferson and, somewhat surprisingly, Madison, whose views on states' rights moderated later in his life.

Unintentionally, the two-party system had evolved from differing political and social points of view. US political parties have continued to rise, fall away and revive.



In CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

When in the Courſe of human events, it becomes neceſsary for one people to diſsolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to aſsume among the powers of the earth, the ſeparate and equal ſtation to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they ſhould declare the cauſes which impel them to the ſeparation. —— We hold these truths to be ſelf-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the purſuit of Happineſs. — That to ſecure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happineſs. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established ſhould not be changed for light and transient cauſes; and accordingly all experience hath ſhewn, that mankind are more diſposed to ſuffer, whi evils are ſufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and uſurpations, purſuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future ſecurity. — Such has been the patient ſufferance of these Colonies; and ſuch is now the neceſsity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and uſurpations, all having in direct object the eſtablishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be ſubmitted to a cand world. —— He has refuſed his Aſsent to Laws, the most wholesome and neceſsary for the public good. —— He has forbidden his Governors to paſs Laws of immediate and preſsing importance, unleſs ſuspended in their operation till his Aſsent should be obtained; and when so ſuspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them. —— He has refuſed t paſs other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unleſs those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right ineſtimable to them and formidable to tyrants only. —— He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them int compliance with his meaſures. —— He has diſsolved Repreſentative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmneſs his invaſions on the rights of the people. —— He has refuſed for a long time, after such diſsolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remain ing in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within. —— He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstruc ting the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refuſing to paſs others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands. —— He has obstructed th Administration of Justice, by refuſing his Aſsent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers —— He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amoun and payment of their salaries. —— He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither ſwarms of Officers to haraſs our people, and eat out their ſubstance. —— He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures. —— He has affected to render the Military independent of and ſuperior to the Civil power. —— He has combined with others to ſubject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Aſsent to their Acts of pretended Legislation: — For Quartering large bodies o armed troops among us: — For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States: — For cutting of our Trade with all parts of the world: — For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent: — For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury: — For transporting us beyo Seas to be tried for pretended offences: — For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Bounda so as to render it at once an example and fit inſtrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies: — For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, an altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments: — For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever. — He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us. —— He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the Liv of our people. —— He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy ſcarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation. —— He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms again their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands. — He has excited domestic inſurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on th inhabitants of our frontiers, the mercileſs Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, ſexes and conditions. In every ſtage of these Oppreſsions We have Petitioned for Redreſs in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our Brittish brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarra able jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and ſettlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these uſurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquieſce in the neceſsity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends. ——

We, therefore, the Representatives of the **united States of America**, in General Congreſs, Aſsembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, ſolemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be **Free and Independent States**; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally diſsolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. —— And for the ſupport of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortune and our ſacred Honor.

Button Gwinnett
Lyman Hall
Geo Walton.

Wm Hooper
Joseph Hewes,
John Penn
Edward Rutledge.
Thos Heyward Junr.
Thomas Lynch Junr.
Arthur Middleton

John Hancock
Samuel Chase
Wm Paca
Thos Stone
Charles Carroll of Carrollton
George Wythe
Richard Henry Lee
Th Jefferson
Benja Harrison
Thos Nelson jr.
Francis Lightfoot Lee
Carter Braxton

Robt Morris
Benjamin Rush
Benja. Franklin
John Morton
Geo Clymer
Jas. Smith
Geo. Taylor
James Wilson
Geo. Ross
Caesar Rodney
Geo Read
Tho M:Kean

Wm Floyd
Phil. Livingston
Frans. Lewis
Lewis Morris
Richd. Stockton
Jno Witherspoon
Fras. Hopkinson
John Hart
Abra Clark

Josiah Bartlett
Wm Whipple
Saml Adams
John Adams
Robt Treat Paine
Elbridge Gerry
Step. Hopkins
William Ellery
Roger Sherman
Saml Huntington
Wm Williams
Oliver Wolcott
Matthew Thornton

The facsimile made in 1823 of the engrossed copy of the Declaration of Independence

The Declaration of Independence

The Declaration of Independence was the founding document of the new United States and set forth the reasons for America's separation from Britain

The first successful English colonies were planted in America in the early-17th century, with Virginia being established in 1607 and the Plymouth Bay Colony in 1620. Others followed, and by the late-18th century, there were 13 such colonies clustered along the eastern shore of North America.

For the most part, the inhabitants of these thriving colonies, of which there were roughly 2.4 million in 1775, were loyal English subjects of the Crown. Several events conspired to turn a large portion of them away from their former allegiance and eventually seek independence from Britain. Ironically, much of it stemmed from Britain's enormous success in the Seven Years' War, played out in the American theatre in the form of the French and Indian War. By its end, Britain was everywhere triumphant, having wrested Canada from its French overlords.

Britain was, however, now saddled with enormous debt, a significant portion of which had been incurred in the defence of its American colonies. It was only right, most members of parliament in London believed, that the colonists should have to pay for their own defence. New taxes would be imposed and the Stamp Act of 1765 soon followed.

This was the first direct tax that Britain had levied on its American colonists, and it was widely resented. The issue for the colonists was that it had been imposed by the distant parliament, and not by representatives of their own in provincial American legislatures. The colonies had no representatives in parliament and this seemed unjust. "Taxation without representation is tyranny," summed up the deep dissatisfaction of many American colonists, who considered themselves genuine Englishmen and entitled to all the same rights.

Revolutionary agitation increased and by the 1770s, a growing number of colonists, calling themselves Patriots, were at odds with Britain. Relations had not been helped by the Boston Massacre of 1770, in which British soldiers shot and killed several Americans during a mob incident.

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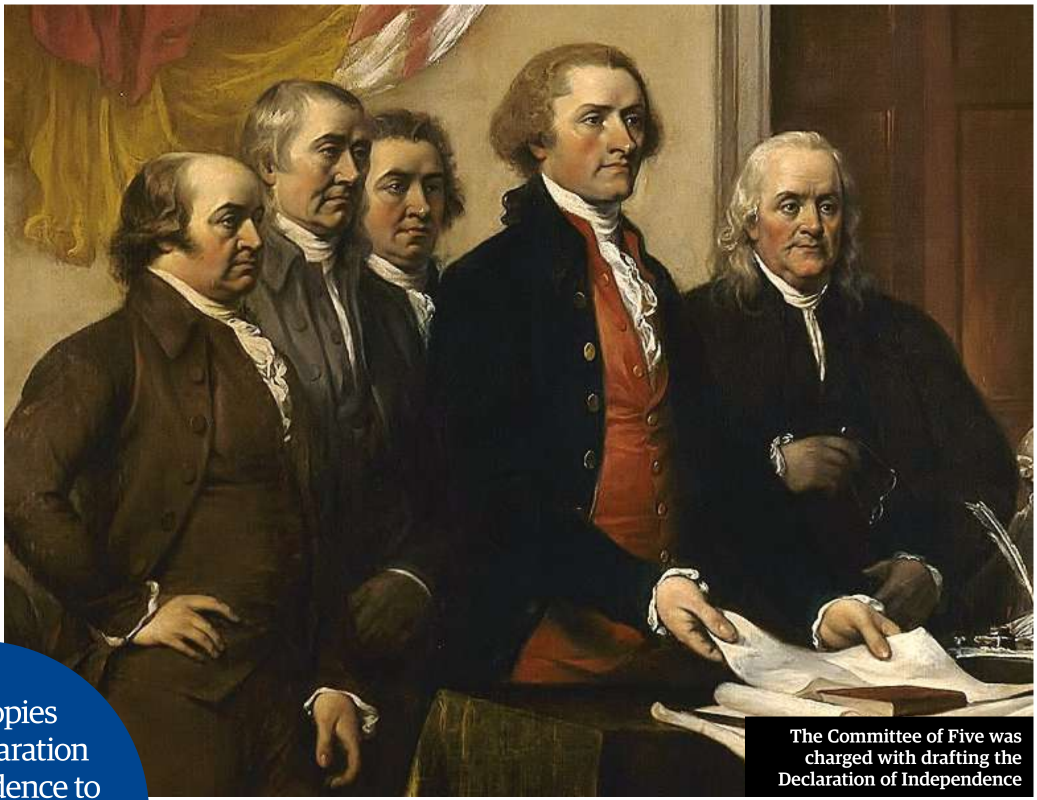


The Committee of Five was charged with drafting the Declaration of Independence

Initial copies of the Declaration of Independence to be disseminated to the public were printed in the Caslon typeface

The imposition of a widely despised tax on tea in 1773 led to the Boston Tea Party, in which colonists disguised as Native Americans dumped imported British tea overboard into Boston Harbor.

The so-called Intolerable Acts, by which parliament sought to punish uppity Bostonians by shutting its harbour to commercial traffic and other disagreeable measures, evoked great sympathy from the other colonies, most of which sent delegates to take part in the First Continental Congress in September 1774 in Philadelphia. Opposition to the government of King George III had now become organised and widespread through the American colonies.

A shooting war began on 19 April 1775 at the Battles of Lexington and Concord when Massachusetts militiamen sought to prevent the destruction of their munitions stores by a detachment of British soldiers. The American Revolution had started in earnest. General George Washington was appointed commander of the Continental Army and forced the king's troops to evacuate Boston in early 1776, but by spring of that year, New York City had been captured by the British, and he was in full retreat.

It was now nearing the middle of June 1776, and the war for independence had been ongoing since the previous April. Not all wished for an irrevocable break with Britain, but the time for restraint was fast receding as the war continued. On 7 June, Richard Henry Lee, a delegate from Virginia, moved the Second Continental Congress, which had been in session since May 1775, to resolve "that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved".

The Congress, meeting in the Philadelphia State House in Pennsylvania, now concluded that it was time for the new republic to explain and justify its motives to the world in seeking to break with Britain. A formal declaration of nationhood would also bring the welcome benefit of allowing the sovereign United States to make treaties and alliances with foreign states for the support of the ongoing war for independence.

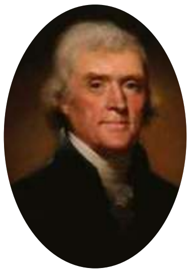
On 11 June, the Committee of Five, so named because it consisted of five picked delegates, was created and entrusted with the job of composing this Declaration of Independence. It selected the various articles that the document would contain, but the primary task of writing it fell to 33-year-old Thomas Jefferson of Virginia.

Jefferson would prove to be a remarkably able choice. A leading member of the colony's plantation-owning gentry, Jefferson had been educated at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg where he began studying in 1760. After completing his studies in 1762, Jefferson would then study law for the next four years under the tutelage of George Wythe for whom he worked as a clerk in Wythe's law practice. A voracious reader who devoured books on all manner of subjects, Jefferson had also come to accept Deism, which taught that a distant God had created the world and man and then left man to his own devices. Jefferson would keep such beliefs mainly to himself during his lifetime.

There were others besides Jefferson, of course, though none would have so direct a hand in writing the Declaration. There was the estimable elder statesman Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, but the bon vivant polymath, drained by a journey to Canada and stricken by gout, would participate little in the Committee's work - though he did receive a draft of the document from Jefferson to look over. There was puritanical John Adams, the Boston lawyer who had once defended the British redcoats being tried for their role in the Boston Massacre, and now a leading proponent of rupture with Britain. Rounding out the Committee of Five was the Connecticut lawyer Roger Sherman, as well as Robert R Livingston, also a lawyer, heralding from New York.

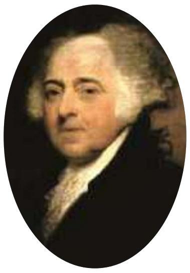
Writing their way to independence

On 11 June 1776, Congress appointed five men to draft the Declaration that would serve as the new nation's justification for independence



Thomas Jefferson

It fell to Thomas Jefferson of Virginia to draft the Declaration of Independence, in which he had to justify the rebellion by laying out the reasons for separation from the mother country. Jefferson faced the difficult task of both encouraging a revolt while also maintaining Americans' respect for authority.



John Adams

Flinty Boston lawyer John Adams, 40 years of age, would later claim that he had initially been offered the task of writing the Declaration, though Thomas Jefferson seemed to have no recollection of this. He suggested only a single alteration of the rough draft shown him by Jefferson. He was later elected the second president of the United States.

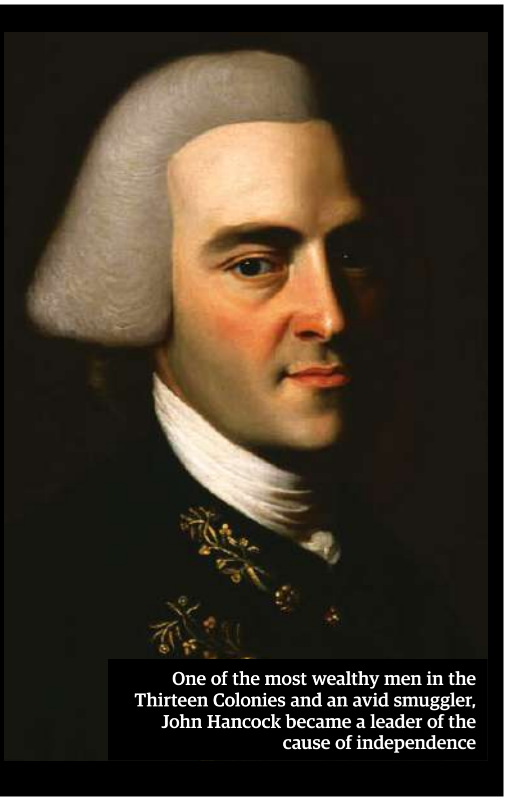
John Hancock: Boston Patriot, merchant and smuggler with the famous signature

Though his father died when John Hancock was just a boy, he had good luck when a wealthy Boston uncle, Thomas Hancock, took him into his home on Beacon Hill. Raised with much love, he attended Boston Latin School and then Harvard College. After his education was completed, Uncle Thomas brought him into his mercantile firm as a clerk. At the age of 23, he was dispatched by his uncle to London to meet with the company's agents. Within a few years, Uncle Thomas had died and John, now 27, took possession of what was said to be the biggest fortune ever compiled in New England.

Rocky times lay ahead. The passage by parliament of the Stamp Act in 1765 had an enormous effect on Hancock's operations. It did not help at all that, by all accounts, Hancock was the foremost smuggler in all of the Thirteen Colonies. He would often bring in illicit goods secretively, by ship, and thereby avoid the tax to be paid upon them. Now, every piece of paper that he needed to conduct his business required a stamp proving that it had been paid through the king's agents. This would be an expensive tax and Hancock was soon a leader of the opposition to it. Parliament's much-reviled tax on tea, which was passed in 1773, made Hancock fear the arrival of large quantities of cheap British East India tea that would undercut his own contraband Dutch product.

The outbreak of the Revolution found him firmly favouring the cause of independence. He was appointed president of the Second Continental Congress held in Philadelphia in 1775. When the Declaration of Independence was made available for signing by the delegates on 2 July 1776, he signed his own name to it, in the middle of the page just below the text itself. "There!" it is claimed Hancock said. "John Bull can read my name without spectacles."

Hancock's name has since become an American byword for a signature.



One of the most wealthy men in the Thirteen Colonies and an avid smuggler, John Hancock became a leader of the cause of independence

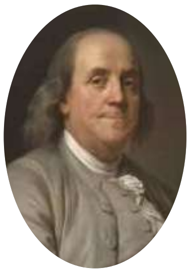
There are four major parts of the Declaration: firstly, the Preamble; the next, in the second paragraph, an exposition of the philosophical basis of a government predicated upon the natural rights; the extensive listing of grievances against the king; and finally the actual 'declaration of independence' by the United States.

Jefferson's primary object in drafting the document was to lay out the specific reasons that had caused the colonies to seek a break with Britain, and so the document itself lists the various ills that King George III had imposed on his erstwhile American subjects. At the beginning of the Declaration, in what is known as the Preamble, Jefferson wrote that "a decent respect for the opinions of mankind" required such a statement. It would have been difficult, if not impossible, under the best of circumstances to persuade the outside world of the rightness of the American cause since there was a deep and longstanding prejudice in other countries against rebellion of any kind against recognised political authority. So Jefferson couched what Americans were doing not as a rebellion in the generally understood sense of the term, but as a revolt of a free people against a king attempting to usurp or squelch their ancient, natural rights.

What followed after the Preamble was Jefferson's philosophy of government: "We hold these truths to be self-evident," Jefferson wrote, "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Next followed the list of grievances that the American colonists had against the King George III. Though it might appear, after reading the stirring opening paragraphs, that the listing of grievances was an exercise in monotony, the list was actually the heart of the document. Each grievance was one more part of the bill of particulars that the colonists were levelling against the king, thereby justifying the revolt.

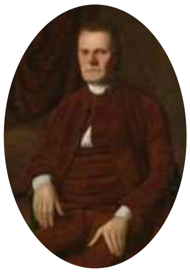
Abraham Lincoln cited the promise of liberty as justification for the North's war to preserve the Union during the Civil War

There are 27 charges made against King George III to demonstrate that he was attempting to subjugate his American subjects. He was, so Jefferson stated, "a prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant". The first charge was that the king had refused to give "his assent to laws" which were needed for the public good. For a long time, the American colonies had been required to send their laws to the kings in Britain to obtain their approval, but George III had been especially apt to strike many of them down. Most of the stricken laws would have been burdensome to British trade with the colonies, so there was an underlying mercantile reason for the king in doing so.



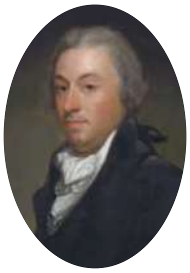
Benjamin Franklin

The 70-year-old Philadelphia printer and scientist Benjamin Franklin, just returned from a difficult journey to Canada, fell ill with gout just before the Committee started meeting. Though he did not contribute to its drafting, he did read the rough draft and suggest revisions.



Roger Sherman

Elderly New Englander Roger Sherman was a Puritan to his core and a staunch supporter of independence. He served mainly as an editor of the document prepared by Jefferson.



Robert R Livingston

Robert R Livingston was a rich New York lawyer appointed to take part in the drafting of the Declaration. He was one of the more conservative members of the Committee and had been the most cool among them about voting for independence.

The Assembly Room where the Second Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence

In a similar vein, George was also accused of refusing to allow royal governors in the colonies to pass laws without his approval, which he then withheld, sometimes for years on end, resulting in an effective veto of the measure.

Jefferson also charged that the king had refused to allow for the incorporation of new districts that could then send delegates to the colonial legislatures. American settlers had moved further westwards, away from the Atlantic seaboard, following the French and Indian War, but these newly settled regions almost always then entered the Patriot camp opposed to the Crown. London would therefore not recognise them unless they explicitly sacrificed the right to representation in the legislatures of their colonies.

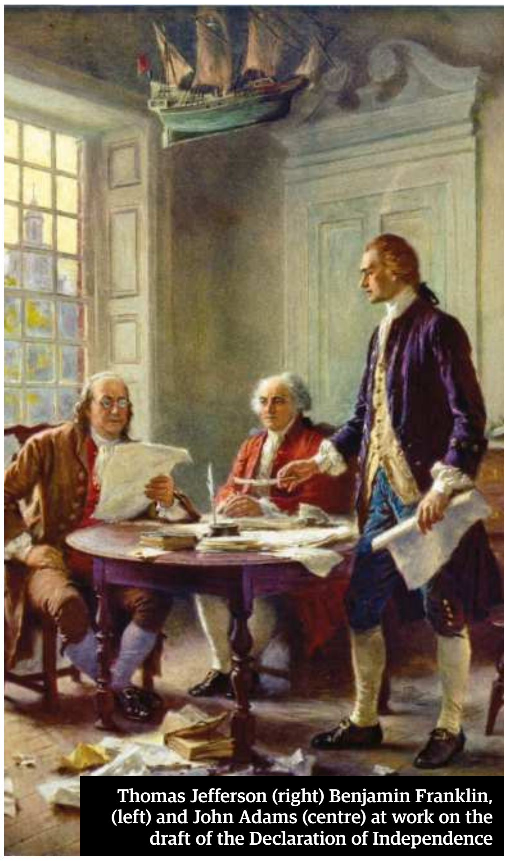
The fifth charge alleged that George had again and again dissolved colonial legislatures. The seventh charge complained that the naturalisation of the foreign-born was being prevented and immigration to the colonies slowed. This was done in the main because the foreigners tended now to come from countries not friendly to Britain and ended up swelling the Patriot camp. The king was also making it harder, Jefferson contended, to secure good title to land, especially in the lands to the west of the Alleghenies and north of the Ohio River. These settlers, once again, were usually inclined to support the Patriot – ie anti-British – cause.

> “On and on Jefferson continued. The king had crippled the colonial judiciary. He had harassed the colonials with his tax revenue officials...”

> Two of the Declaration’s signers, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, would die on the same day – 4 July 1826

On and on Jefferson continued, firing broadside after broadside. The king had crippled the colonial judiciary. He had harassed the colonials with his tax revenue officials. He had quartered British soldiers in American homes and the colonists also had to pay for their upkeep, even though it was a time of peace. Colonial trade had been severely hindered by royal decree, Jefferson charged. Taxes had been levied on the colonists without their consent; it was taxation without representation. Another charge complained that free English law in Quebec had been abolished and that this had resulted in the establishment of “arbitrary government” there. The Quebec Act of 1774 had given legal recognition to the Roman Catholic Church and French law in the formerly French-ruled province of Quebec. Most American colonials were deeply anti-Catholic, and this legal recognition rankled. Making matters worse, the borders of the province had been pushed out to the Ohio River, and these territories had been decreed off-limits to settlement by English-speaking settlers. Jefferson wrote also that George was sending large numbers of foreign, that is, non-British, mercenary troops to America to put down the rebellion.

The final part of the Declaration of Independence was the one in which the colonies actually declared



Thomas Jefferson (right) Benjamin Franklin, (left) and John Adams (centre) at work on the draft of the Declaration of Independence their formal independence. Jefferson ended his text with a flourish, writing that “for the support of this declaration we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour”.

The signed copy of the Declaration of Independence is on display in the US National Archives in Washington, D.C.

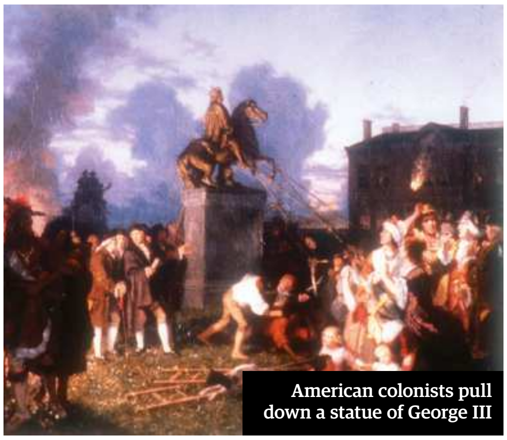
With the Declaration of Independence completed, and it having undergone some revisions with the rest of the Committee of Five, it was submitted to Congress on 28 June. On 2 July, the 56 colonial delegates voted on the Declaration. It was approved, against no opposition, though the text itself underwent some substantial revisions by Congress, one of which was the inclusion, in the final part of the Declaration, of the same verbiage used in Richard Henry Lee's earlier motion. The revisions were completed and the document ratified on 4 July 1776, the date forever associated with the birth of America as an independent republic.

The united colonies were now states, separate from Britain, and though there was still a long war ahead to be fought, the United States of America had been officially inaugurated. That they were committing treason, at least in the eyes of the Crown, was not lost on the men who gathered in the Philadelphia State House. Two of the signers of the Declaration were Benjamin Harrison of Virginia and Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts. It is said that after they had both signed, Harrison, a very rotund man, in a bit of gallows humour jested to Gerry, who was himself extremely thin, that, “When the hanging time comes… I shall have the advantage over you… with me it will be over in a minute. But you will be dancing in the air for an hour after I'm gone.”

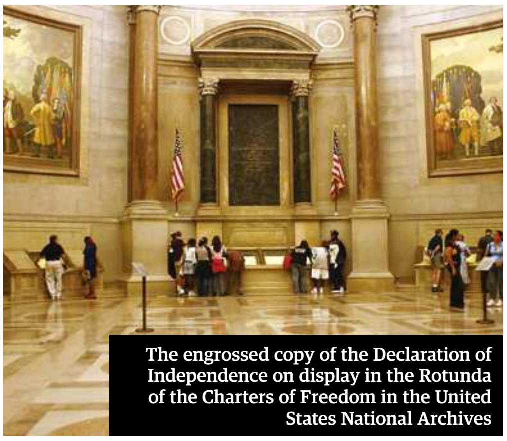
It is also reported that John Hancock, president of the Second Continental Congress, took note of the seriousness of what they were doing, warning, “We must be unanimous; there must be no pulling in different ways; we must all hang together.” To which Benjamin Franklin then replied, “Yes, we must all hang together, or most assuredly we will all hang separately.”

John Hancock

The famously large signature of John Hancock, president of the Second Continental Congress



American colonists pull down a statue of George III



The engrossed copy of the Declaration of Independence on display in the Rotunda of the Charters of Freedom in the United States National Archives

The king who lost America

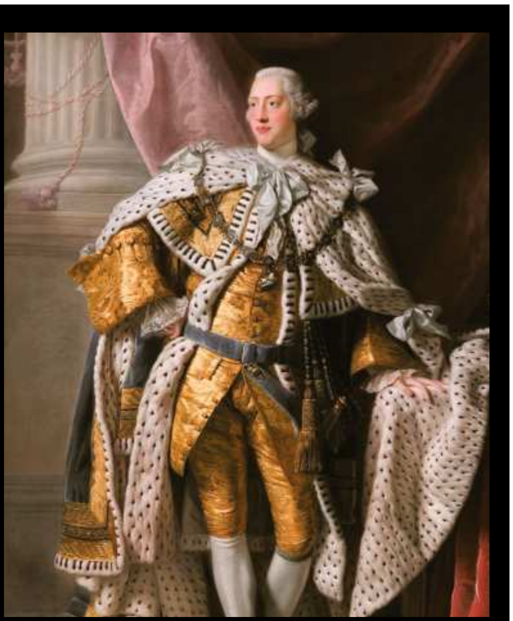
King George III received harsh criticism in the Declaration of Independence. Who was this man and was he really as bad as Jefferson made him out to be?

King George III tried and failed to prevent the Thirteen Colonies from gaining their independence, and has received a large share of the blame for their loss ever since. Having come to the throne of Britain in 1760, he was a constitutional monarch, compelled to govern his realm not by royal fiat but in conjunction with parliament. Politically, George was prone to stubbornness, and this made governing difficult as he was extremely reluctant to condone changes in policy even when they were wise and expedient.

This stubbornness would hinder him in his relations with the American colonies leading up to the Revolution. He would not countenance any alteration of course that might have quelled the growing colonial unrest. He had sympathetic majorities in both the House of Lords and the House of Commons during this time, and so could largely get his way with obedient ministers and a pliant parliament. Lord North was the king's prime minister and dutiful servant from 1770 to 1782, the period in which revolutionary fervour boiled over and resulted in outright war. During this time, North faithfully executed George's policies that ultimately would drive the colonies to independence, failing to act as a check on the misguided policies of his royal master.

George was called a tyrant by many angry colonists, and the Declaration of Independence contains a long list of some 27 colonial grievances against him. Many of these grievances had at their core a dismay at the king's failure to ensure that the American colonists, who saw themselves as Englishmen, were accorded all of the rights of Englishmen. Yet not all Americans saw him as a monster. There were substantial numbers who remained loyal to the Crown right through to the end of the War of Independence. Even John Adams, one of the drafters of the Declaration itself, and a future president of the United States, thought some criticism of him to be too harsh. “I never believed George to be a tyrant in disposition and nature,” he said of the king. “I always believed him to be deceived by his courtiers and on both sides of the Atlantic, and in his official capacity only cruel.”

Whatever judgment may be made about George as a man, it was his American policy that largely brought about the colonial rebellion and saw a new nation come into being. Notwithstanding the tumultuousness of his years on the throne, he would enjoy a long reign, extending until 1820. However, in his last decade he was mentally incapacitated, probably stricken with porphyria, and his son reigned as prince regent from 1811 until George III's death in January 1820.



What if…

Britain had won the War of Independence?

Interviews by Matt Bennett

PROF STEPHEN CONWAY

Stephen Conway is a professor of history in the History department at University College London. His teaching focuses on 18th-century British and colonial American history and his publications include *The British Isles And The War Of American Independence* (2000) and *A Short History Of The American Revolutionary War* (2013).

PROF EMERITUS JOHN FERLING

A specialist in early American history, John Ferling has written several books around this subject area, such as *Struggle For A Continent: The Wars Of Early America* (1993) and *Almost A Miracle: The American Victory In The War Of Independence* (2007).

PROF ROBERT ALLISON

Robert Allison has taught American history at Suffolk University in Boston, MA, since 1992, when he earned his doctorate in the History of American Civilisation at Harvard University. He chairs Suffolk's History department and also teaches history at the Harvard Extension School. His books include *The American Revolution: A Concise History* (2011) and *The Boston Tea Party* (2007).

What if Britain had won the American War of Independence?
SC: The American colonies would have remained in the British Empire, at least for the time being. Perhaps the colonies would have reconciled themselves to a restoration of British control and gradually have moved towards greater home rule and eventual independence in the same manner as many countries in the later British Commonwealth. But it's equally likely that the rebellion might have flared up again in a few years, or the British government might have taken the view that it was far too expensive to maintain a large army of occupation in the conquered colonies and de facto independence would have been granted.

Is it likely that victory for Britain would have merely delayed American independence? Or could the USA still be part of the Commonwealth today, like Canada?
RA: Either one is possible. [Benjamin] Franklin thought that independence would come naturally; he anticipated something like the British Commonwealth. He thought it would be impossible, when the American population was far greater than the population of England, for the government of America to continue to be administered in London.

JF: Franklin thought America's population would surpass that of Great Britain by the middle of the 19th century, and he based his calculation on natural increase alone. When immigration is factored in, America was certain to have had a far larger population by 1850. I don't see how London could have avoided extending far greater autonomy to the Americans [over] the course of the 19th century.

What might have become of the 13 colonies after the war had Britain been victorious, as well as revolutionary leaders like George Washington?
SC: The leaders of the rebellion might well have been treated in the same manner as the leaders of the rebellion of 1745-6 in Scotland, who were executed for treason.

JF: If Franklin is to be believed, the British public was enraged toward the colonists at the time the war broke out; years of war only stoked those passions. Had the rebellion been crushed, retribution would have been the order of the day. Some leaders would have been executed, some imprisoned for long terms, and the colonists likely would have had to pay fines or faced some sort of economic punishment.

And what do you think would have happened to the rest of America - beyond the 13 colonies?
JF: The French Revolution might have been America's opening for attempting once again to gain independence. But assuming that had not been the case, I think London would have continued pushing towards the west. It almost certainly would have taken the British longer to reach the Pacific than it took the United States. British merchants looked askance at settlements beyond the Appalachian barrier, but Britain would have gotten there eventually.

RA: Spain claimed the territory west of the Mississippi [River], but hardly controlled it. Britain probably would have kept the Native Americans of the Ohio Valley and the territory that is now Alabama and Mississippi, as they were trading partners. This might have stymied the spread of American settlers to the west. Then again, it might not have, as the Royal Proclamation of 1763 had not done so.

The real impetus for American settlement of the Great Plains - the area between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains, much of it wrested from Mexico in the [mid-19th century] - was to connect the east coast with the west. In the 1840s

The first cornerstone of the White House was laid in 1792 - nine years after the War of Independence ended the United States and Britain nearly went to war over what is today British Columbia [in Canada]; '54°-40 or Fight' was James K Polk's campaign slogan in 1844 [before he became the 11th US president]. Britain, with its naval superiority, would have controlled the American west coast.

Spain would have been squeezed out. It's not clear if Mexico or the other Latin American countries would have developed in the same way had there not been an independent United States in North America.

What benefits – or disadvantages – might victory have brought Britain?

SC: The benefits, if such they were, would have taken the form of greater economic control of the colonies, and especially of their overseas trade, which was subject to the restrictions of the 17th-century English Navigation Acts. But that advantage was unlikely to have been very much greater than the British reaped from defeat. The independent United States remained in a semi-colonial economic relationship with Britain for many years after 1783, consuming vast quantities of British manufactured goods and sending to Britain enormous quantities of raw materials. Had the British won the war, they would have been burdened by the costs of governing and defending America, so we can say that defeat left Britain with many of the benefits but few of the costs of empire.

JF: A great challenge would have been to somehow win back the hearts of the colonists. It would not have been easy. A victorious America largely hated the British for a century after the Revolution. Hatred would have lingered longer and burned more deeply in a defeated America.

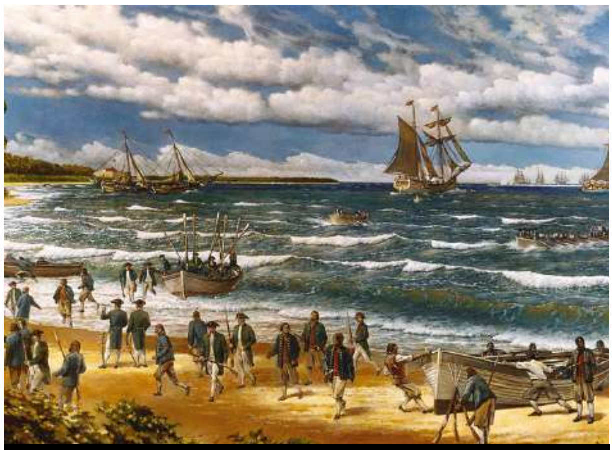
How might nations, other than Britain and the US, have been affected if the war had gone the other way?

RA: France, Spain and Native Americans [would have been] most notably [affected]. France supported the Americans, but primarily as a way to weaken Britain and protect France's West Indian colonies. Would the French Revolution have happened without the successful example of the American Revolution – or the huge debt France incurred by [participating in] it? Granted, France was reeling from an ineffective government overladen with aristocracy and political inefficiency, and the defeat in the Seven Years' War. Spain was fortifying its Mexican borders in the 1770s and 1780s; its main interest in the war in America was to get back Gibraltar.

The Native Americans were the big losers in the war though. The British were their allies, though allies the British sold out when it served their interests. I'm not singling out the British for doing this, as most nations tend to seek their own self-interest. The British had proposed an Indian buffer state in the Ohio Valley, and they were trading partners with the Iroquois, Creek and Cherokee tribes – one reason they supported the British rather than the Americans.

Could a one-nation unification with Canada have been on the cards for North America?

SC: The Americans tried to conquer Canada in 1775, and wanted it ceded to the United States in the peace negotiations of 1782-3. But the British were determined to keep Canada, which was now increasingly gaining the Protestant population British governments had wanted since 1763, thanks to the exodus of American loyalists from the USA.



The Battle of Nassau was an American naval assault on the then British-ruled island in the Bahamas which took place in March 1776

If America had lost, then the loyalists may have stayed in the old British colonies, leaving Canada overwhelmingly francophone and Catholic, in which case it would have remained very different from the rest of the mainland British colonies.

JF: I think Britain would have opposed unification, at least for a very long time after it crushed the American rebellion. During the Seven Years' War it had sought to keep the 13 colonies from unifying under one government, as Franklin had proposed in his Albany Plan of Union. Had it defeated the colonists in the Revolutionary War, Britain might have divided some colonies to keep them weak. Furthermore, the changes it sought to impose in Massachusetts' government in the Coercive Acts in 1775 probably would have been the rule of thumb in every colony.

Do you think Australia would have still been developed as a penal colony if the 13 American colonies had remained under British control?

How would it be different?

Real timeline

1774

Intolerable Acts passed
The Intolerable, or Coercive, Acts are passed by the British government in early-1774 in response to the perceived lawlessness of the Boston Tea Party – a colonial uprising many years in the making.
1774

Continental Congress held
The First Continental Congress is formed and they agree to oppose the Intolerable Acts. From early on there's a sense that conflict is both inevitable and imminent.
1774

War begins
The first shots are fired in the war, with the opening conflict at Lexington involving local Massachusetts militia (the formation of which had been suggested by the First Continental Congress in 1774) and British forces.
19 April 1775

Battle of Bunker Hill
In this major battle, Patriot troops bravely resist a repeated British assault, only to be eventually worn down by the sheer numbers and persistence of the enemy – plus a lack of ammunition. The British lose massive numbers but prevail to take Bunker Hill.
17 June 1775

Britain rejects peace
In the summer of 1775, King George III ignores the Second Continental Congress's Olive Branch Petition, and the war continues apace. In May 1776, King Louis XVI of France solves the Americans' munitions problem by granting a huge donation. Soon after the US Declaration of Independence is voted in on 4 July 1776.
1775-1776

Real timeline

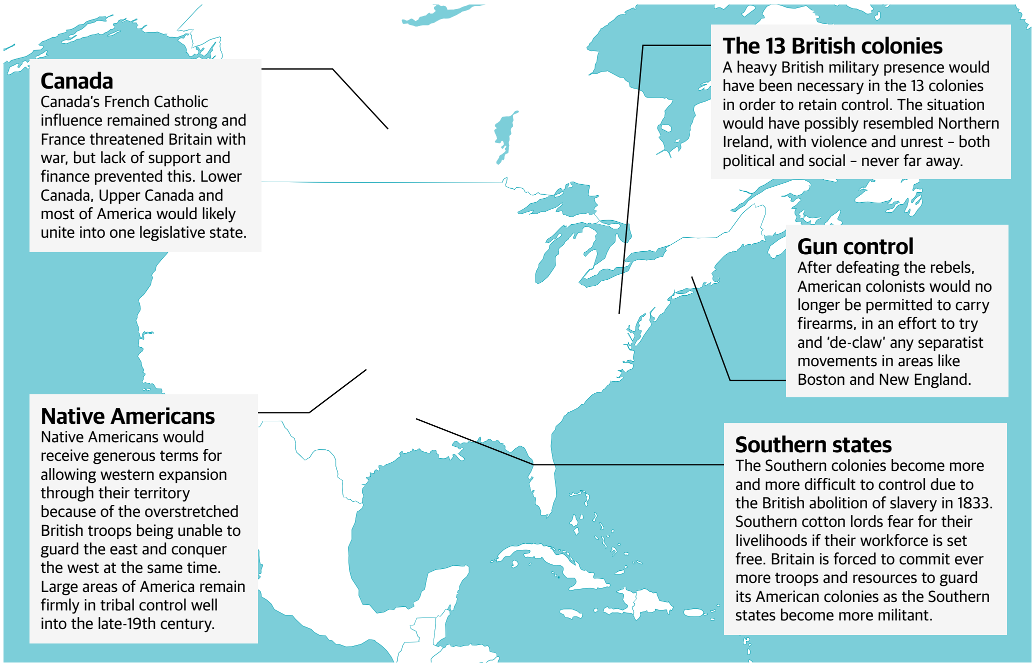
Alternate timeline

SC: New South Wales in Australia was established as a penal colony, but if the North American colonies had remained British, there would have been less incentive to ship convicts so far. America was the cheaper option by a long way. Incidentally, the idea of imprisonment and reformation of convicts would have suffered a blow, as it was the end of transportation to the American colonies that provided an opportunity for reformers who argued that criminals should be incarcerated and improved, rather than executed or exported. More broadly, we can say that the loss of America saw a shift in British imperial focus towards the East - especially Asia. This so-called 'swing to the East' has perhaps been exaggerated, but there was undoubtedly a recalibration of imperial priorities. That said, expansion in India had already started, and would probably have continued, though not perhaps at the same pace.

RA: Probably. Britain's real colonial interests in the 1770s were not America, but India, Jamaica and Barbados. And so Britain wanted control of sea routes to India, and also direct trade with China. Australia would be useful to both.

If Britain had retained control of America, how might this have impacted 20th-century events like WWI?

SC: If we assume that the British had won the war, and the colonies had remained subject to the British crown, they would no doubt have entered World War I in the same manner as the British Dominions in 1914. Whether that would have tilted the balance in favour of the Allies and against Germany/Austria-Hungary is impossible to say; maybe a still-dependent America would not have industrialised so quickly and its population would have been smaller, with the result that the addition of strength was nowhere near as great as it was in 1917-18 [when they actually entered WWI].



Canada
Canada's French Catholic influence remained strong and France threatened Britain with war, but lack of support and finance prevented this. Lower Canada, Upper Canada and most of America would likely unite into one legislative state.

The 13 British colonies
A heavy British military presence would have been necessary in the 13 colonies in order to retain control. The situation would have possibly resembled Northern Ireland, with violence and unrest - both political and social - never far away.

Gun control
After defeating the rebels, American colonists would no longer be permitted to carry firearms, in an effort to try and 'de-claw' any separatist movements in areas like Boston and New England.

Native Americans
Native Americans would receive generous terms for allowing western expansion through their territory because of the overstretched British troops being unable to guard the east and conquer the west at the same time. Large areas of America remain firmly in tribal control well into the late-19th century.

Southern states
The Southern colonies become more and more difficult to control due to the British abolition of slavery in 1833. Southern cotton lords fear for their livelihoods if their workforce is set free. Britain is forced to commit ever more troops and resources to guard its American colonies as the Southern states become more militant.

JF: My understanding is that Britain made a concerted effort to smooth relations with the US beginning around 1890, which proved helpful during World War I. How that war would have been seen in an America that was tied to Britain as colonies or in a Commonwealth arrangement is difficult to know. Canada did not need any prodding to back London in 1914. However, there was a deep strain of resentment in America in 1776 (one can find it in Thomas Paine and Benjamin Franklin) at the colonies having been dragged repeatedly into that 'old rotten state's plundering wars' (Franklin). Such a sentiment might only have hardened over time and, as for many in Ireland, a European war might have been the spark for many Americans to rise up in favour of breaking away from Britain.

Washington for the win
George Washington carries out a surprise attack on the British contingency at Trenton, NJ. The Patriots claim a decisive victory, boosting morale.
1776

British surrender
The British army surrenders at Yorktown on 19 October 1781. In February of the following year, the British government decides to abandon the war.
1781-1782

Another war
The USA declares war on Britain, reopening the conflict. The prior conflict has overshadowed the 1812 War, but *The Star-Spangled Banner* anthem dates from this time.
1812-1815

US enters WWI
Having preferred a policy of neutrality, and with concern for trade with Britain in mind, America enters WWI, and US soldiers fight alongside the Brits.
April 1917

Battle of Long Island
Sir William Howe, C-in-C of British forces, claims victory at Long Island. The Americans try to escape to Manhattan, but the British cut them off. George Washington is killed.
27 August 1776

Britain faces new enemy
Support for America grows in Europe, particularly in France, and on 10 July 1778 France declares war on Britain. The French navy plays a key role.
1777-1778

Penal colonies
The 13 American colonies along the Atlantic coast serve as the main destination for UK transportation. Far fewer convicts are sent to Australia.
1790

France invades Spain
King Louis XVIII, angered by what was seen as Spain's gross betrayal in selling 'French' Louisiana, orders the invasion of Spain, but retreats when Britain weighs in.
1823

American population booms
Controlled immigration into British North America has gradually increased, with transportation of criminals to both America and Australia ending in 1868.
1868

Anglo-American Agreement
This pact officially ends the war. Patriot supporters who don't flee are imprisoned or hung, including key leaders like John Adams and Benjamin Franklin. Britain goes on to cement her hold of the colonies.
1776

Louisiana purchase
With France effectively bankrupted by its support for the American Revolutionary War, Spain is courted by the British government and persuaded to release Louisiana. Britain purchases the territory at a discount.
1803

Act of union
Lower Canada, Upper Canada and the American colonies are united into British North America. The British government appeases the French by granting trade with the regions that France had ceded.
1840-1867

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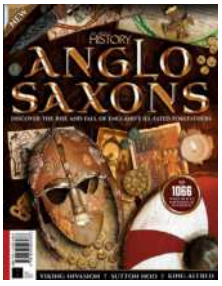
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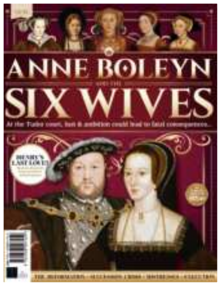
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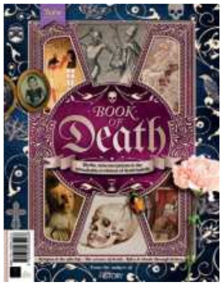
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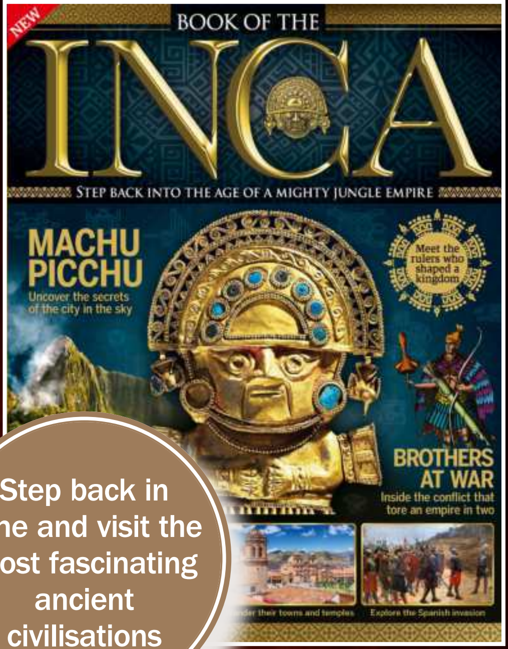
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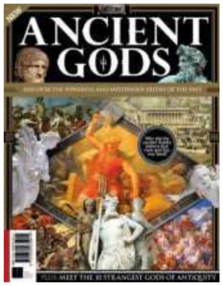
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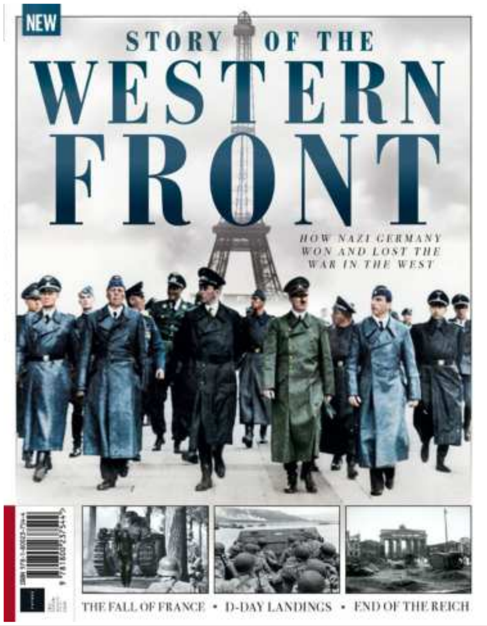

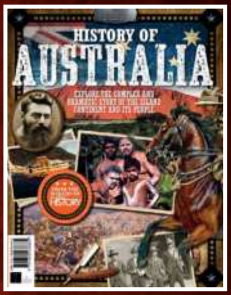

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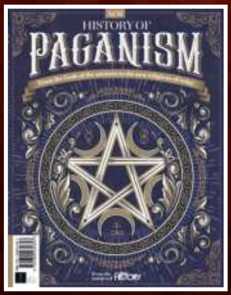
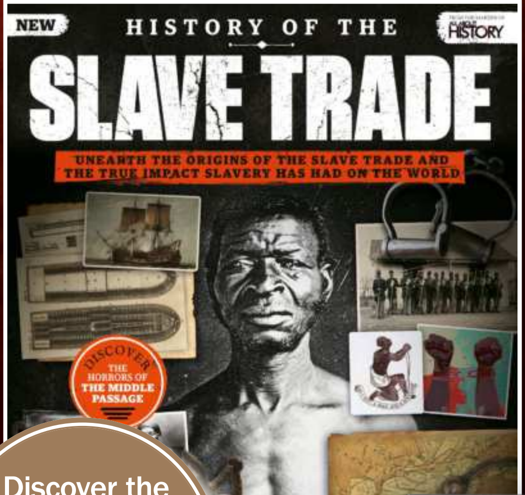

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